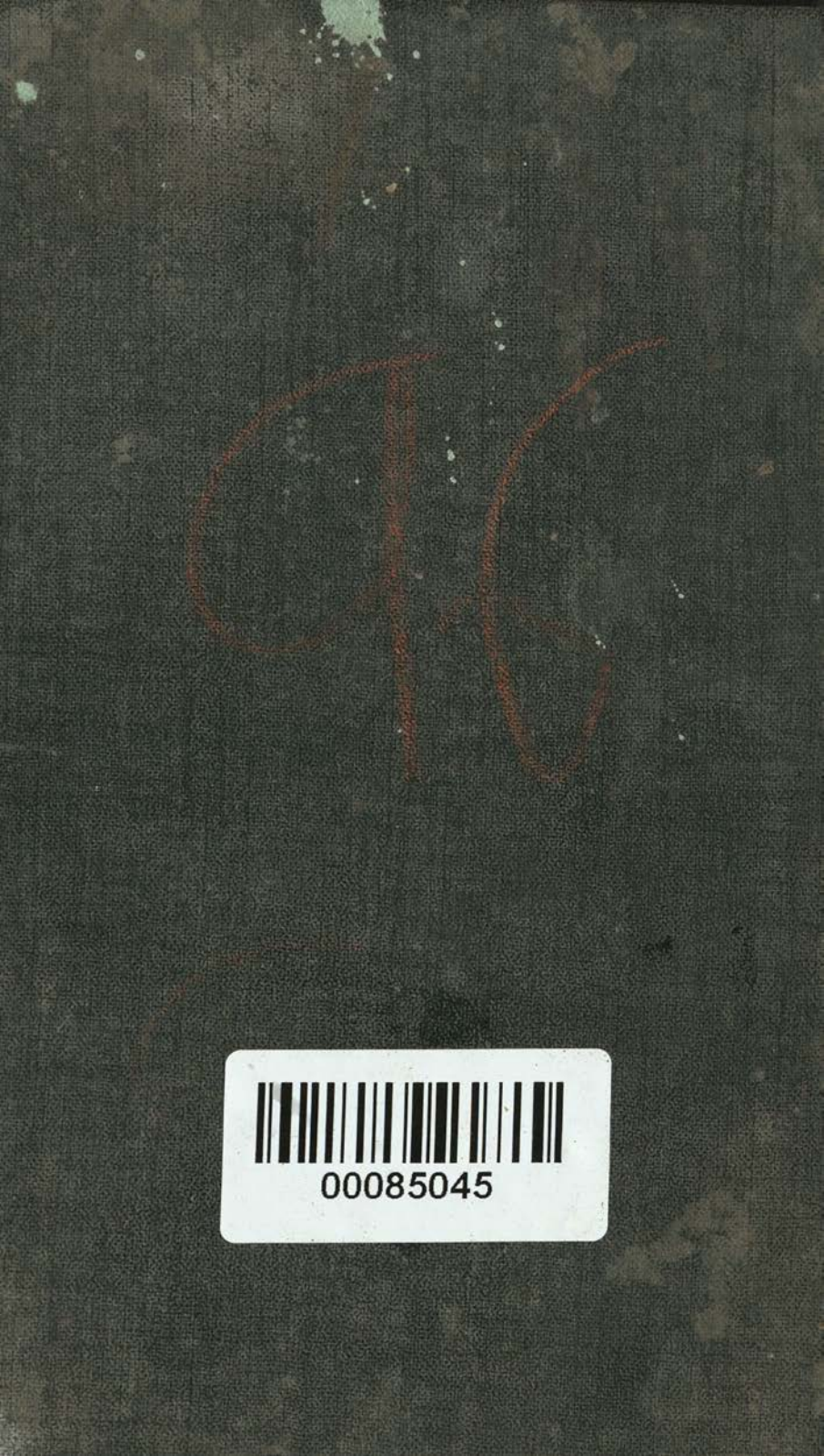
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EASTERN LIFE,

PRESENT AND PAST.

BY

HARRIET MARTINEAU.

"Joyful to receive the impression thereof, as the eye joyeth to receive light; and not only delighted in beholding the variety of things, and vicissitude of times, but raised also to find out and discern the ordinances and decrees, which throughout all these changes are infallibly observed."—*Bacon. Advancement of Learning, I.*

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

In the autumn of 1846, I left home for, as I supposed, a few weeks, to visit some of my family and friends. At Liverpool, I was invited by my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Richard V. Yates, to accompany them in their proposed travels in the East. By the zeal and kindness of those who saw what a privilege this journey would be, all obstacles in the shape of business and engagements were cleared away; and in a month, I was ready to set out with my kind friends.—At Malta, we fell in with Mr. Joseph C. Ewart, who presently joined our party, and remained with us till we reached Malta on our return. There is nothing that I do not owe to my companions for their unceasing care and indulgence: but one act of kindness I felt particularly. They permitted me to read to them my Egyptian journal; (there was no time for the others) that I might have the satisfaction of knowing whether they

agreed in my impressions of the facts which came under our observation. About these facts there is an entire agreement between them and me.—For the opinions expressed in this book, no one is answerable but myself.

It is by permission of my companions that I have thus named them here, and spoken of them in my book as occasion required. I am truly obliged to them for granting me this freedom, by which I am spared much trouble of concealment and circumlocution which, in their opinion and mine, the personal affairs of travel are not important enough to require and justify.—Not having asked a similar permission from our comrades in our Arabian journey, I have said as little as possible about them, and suppressed their names. I shall be glad if they find anything in my narrative to remind them pleasantly of that remarkable season of our lives, —our five weeks' abode in the Desert.

Sir G. Wilkinson must be almost tired of the testimonies and thanks of grateful travellers: but I must just say that he was, by his books, a daily benefactor to us in Egypt. It is really cheering to find that any one *can* be so accurate, and on so large a scale, as his works prove him to be. Such almost faultless correctness

requires an union of intellectual and moral powers and training which it is encouraging for those who are interested in the results of travel to contemplate. After making the fullest use of his "Modern Egypt and Thebes," we find only about half-a-dozen points in which we differ from him.

In regard to that difficult matter,—difficult to those who do not understand Arabic,—the spelling of the names of places and persons in Egypt and Arabia,—I have done what every one will allow to be the safest thing;—I have followed the authority of Mr. Lane wherever I could. If any English reader complains of me for altering the look of familiar Egyptian names, it is enough to reply that Mr. Lane knows better than any one, and that I copy from him. If I have departed from his method anywhere, it is merely because I had not his authority before me in those particular instances.

H. M.

AMBLESIDE,
25th March, 1848.

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PART I.

EGYPT AND ITS FAITH.

"They are extremely religious, and surpass all men in the worship they render to the gods." *Herodotus*, II. 37.

"Wherefore they were highly celebrated by Apollo's oracle (recorded by Porphyrius) and preferred before all other nations for teaching rightly 'that hard and difficult way, that leadeth to God and happiness.'"

Cudworth. Intellectual System, Book I. 4.

"For, as for the uttermost antiquity, which is like Fame that muffles her head, and tells tales, I cannot presume much of it; for I would not willingly imitate the manner of those that describe maps, which when they come to some far countries, whereof they have no knowledge, set down how there be great wastes and deserts there: so I am not apt to affirm that they knew little, because what they knew is little known to us."

Bacon. Interpretation of Nature, ch. V.

EGYPT AND ITS FAITH.

CHAPTER I.

FIRST SIGHT OF AFRICA.—FIRST SIGHTS IN AFRICA.—ALEXANDRIA.

My first sight of Africa was on a somewhat lurid November evening, when the descending sun marked out by its red light a group of purple rocks to the westward, which had not been visible till then, and which presently became again invisible when the sun had gone down behind them, and the glow of the sky had melted away. What we saw was the island of Zembra, and the neighbouring coast of Tunis. Nothing in Africa struck me more than this its first phantom appearance amidst the chill and gathering dusk of evening, and with a vast expanse of sea heaving red between us and it.

My next sight of Africa was when I came on deck early on the morning of the 20th of November. A Lybian headland was looming to the south-east. Bit by bit, more land appeared, low and grey: then the fragments united, and we had before us a continuous line of coast, level, sandy and white, with an Arab

tower on a single eminence. Twice more during the day we saw such a tower, on just such an eminence. The sea was now of a milky blue, and lustrous, as if it were one flowing and heaving opal. Presently it became of the lightest shade of green. When a tower and a ruined building were seen together, every one called out "Alexandria!" and we expected to arrive by noon: but we passed the tower and ruins, and saw only a further stretch of low and sandy coast. It was three o'clock before we were in harbour.—When we came on deck after dinner, we found that we were waiting for a pilot; and that we ought to be growing impatient, as there was only an hour of daylight left, and the harbour could not be entered after dark. There was no response from a pilot-boat which we hailed; and one of our boats was sent off to require the attendance of the pilot, who evidently thought he could finish another piece of business before he attended to ours. He was compelled to come; and it was but just in time. The stars were out, and the last brilliant lights had faded from the waters, before we anchored. As we entered the harbour, there was to the south-west, the crowd of windmills which are so strange an object in an African port: before us was the town, with Pompey's Pillar rising behind the roofs: further north, the Pasha's palace and hareem, with their gardens and rows of palms coming down to the margin of the sea: further round, the lighthouse; and to the east, at the point of the land, a battery. The Pasha's men-of-war, which do not bear well a noon-day examination, looked imposing amidst the brilliant lights and deep shadows of evening, their red flag, with its crescent and single star,

floating and falling in the breeze and lull. But for the gorgeous light, there would have been nothing beautiful in the scene, except the flag (the most beautiful in the world) and the figure of our pilot as he stood robed, turbaned and gesticulating on the paddle-box;—a perfect feast to western eyes: but the light shed over the flat and dreary prospect a beauty as home-felt as it does over the grey rain-cloud when it brings out the bow. As we were turning and winding into the harbour, a large French steamer was turning and winding out,—setting forth homewards,—her passengers on deck, and lights gleaming from her ports. Before we came to anchor, she was aground; and sorry we were to see her lying there when we went ashore.

Before our anchor was down, we had a crowd of boats about us, containing a few European gentlemen and a multitude of screaming Arabs. I know no din to be compared to it but that of a frog concert in a Carolina swamp. We had before wondered how our landing was to be accomplished; and the spectacle of the departure of some of our shipmates did not relieve our doubts. We could not pretend to lay about us with stout sticks, as we saw some amiable gentlemen do, purely from the strength of their philosophical conviction that this is the only way to deal with Arabs. Mr. E. had gone ashore among the first, to secure rooms for us: and what we three should have done with ourselves and our luggage without help, there is no saying. But we had help. An English merchant of Alexandria kindly took charge of us; put our luggage into one boat and ourselves into another, and accompanied us ashore. The silence of our little

passage from the ship to the quay was a welcome respite: but on the quay we found ourselves among a crowd of men in a variety of odd dresses, and boys pushing their little donkeys in among us, and carts pulled hither and thither,—every body vociferating and hustling in the starlight. Our luggage was piled upon a long cart, and we followed it on foot: but there was an immediate stoppage about some Custom House difficulty,—got over we know not how. Then the horse ran away, broke his girths, and scattered some of our goods. At last, however, we achieved the walk to our hotel;—a walk through streets not narrow for an eastern city. All the way we had glimpses of smoking householders in their dim interiors, turbaned artisans, and yellow lamplight behind latticed windows. The heat was oppressive to us, after our cool days at sea.—The rest of the evening was fatiguing enough.

The crowd of Bombay passengers hurrying over their preparations, their letter-writing and their tea, in order to start for Cairo at nine o'clock; the growling and snarling of the camels, loading in the Square; the flare of the cressets;—the heat, light, noise and hurry were overpowering after the monotony of sea life. I sought repose in letter-writing, and had nearly forgotten our actual position when I was spoken to by a departing ship-mate, and, looking up, saw a Greek standing at my elbow, an Arab filling up the door-way, and a Nubian nursemaid coming in for a crying child.—Before ten o'clock, all was comparatively quiet,—the Square clear of omnibuses, camels, and the glare of torches, and our Hotel no

longer a scene of crowding and confusion. There was nothing to prevent our having a good night, in preparation for our first day of African sight-seeing.

When I looked out of my window early the next morning, I saw, at the moment, nothing peculiarly African. The Frank Square is spacious, and the houses large; but they would be considered shabby and ugly any where else. The consular flag-staves on the roofs strike the eye; and the flood of brilliant sunlight from behind the minaret made the mornings as little like England in November as could well be. Presently, however, a string of camels passed through the Square, pacing noiselessly along. I thought them then, as I think them now, after a long acquaintance with them, the least agreeable brutes I know. Nothing can be uglier,—unless it be the ostrich; which is ludicrously like the camel, in form, gait and expression of face. The patience of the camel, so celebrated in books, is what I never had the pleasure of seeing. So impatient a beast I do not know,—growling, groaning and fretting whenever asked to do or bear any thing, —looking on such occasions as if it longed to bite, if only it dared. Its malignant expression of face is lost in pictures: but it may be seen whenever one looks for it. The mingled expression of spite, fear and hopelessness in the face of the camel always gave me the impression of its being, or feeling itself, a *damned* animal. I wonder some of the old painters of hell did not put a camel into their foreground, and make a traditional emblem of it. It is true, the Arab loves his own camel, kisses its lips, hugs its neck, calls it his darling and his jewel, and declares he loves it exactly

as he loves his eldest son: but it does not appear that any man's affection extends beyond his own particular camel, which is truly, for its services, an inestimable treasure to him. He is moved to kick and curse at any but the domestic member of the species, as he would be by the perverseness and spite of any other ill-tempered creature. The one virtue of the camel is its ability to work without water; but, out of the desert, I hardly think that any rider would exchange the willing, intelligent and proud service of the horse for that of the camel which objects to every thing, and will do no service but under the compulsion of its own fears.

When the camels had passed, some women entered the Square from different openings. I was surprised to see their faces hardly covered. They pulled their bit of blue rag over, or half over, their faces when any one approached them, as a matter of form; but in Alexandria, at least, we could generally get a sight of any face we had a mind to see,—excepting, of course, those of mounted ladies. As we went up the country, we found the women more and more closely veiled, to the borders of Nubia, where we were again favoured with a sight of the female countenance.

The next sight in the Square was a hareem, going out for a ride;—a procession of ladies on asses,—each lady enveloped in a sort of balloon of black silk, and astride on her ass;—her feet displaying a pair of bright yellow morocco boots. Each ass was attended by a running footman; and the officer of the hareem brought up the rear.

By this time, my friends were ready for a cup of coffee and a walk before breakfast: and we went forth

to see what we could see. After leaving the Square, we made our way through heaps of rubbish and hillocks of dust to the new fortifications, passing Arab huts more sordid and desolate-looking than I remember to have seen in other parts of the country. We met fewer blind and diseased persons than we expected; and I must say that I was agreeably surprised, both this morning and throughout my travels in Egypt, by the appearance of the people. About the dirt there can be no doubt;—the dirt of both dwellings and persons; and the diseases which proceed from want of cleanliness: but the people appeared to us, there and throughout the country, sleek, well-fed and cheerful. I am not sure that I saw an ill-fed person in all Egypt. There is hardship enough of other kinds,—abundance of misery to sadden the heart of the traveller; but not that, as far as we saw, of want of food. I am told, and no doubt truly, that this is partly owing to the law of the Kurán by which every man is bound to share what he has, to the last mouthful, with his brother in need: but there must be enough, or nearly enough food for all, whatever be the law of distribution. Of the progressive depopulation of Egypt for many years past, I am fully convinced; but I am confident that a deficiency of food is not the cause, nor, as yet, a consequence. While I believe that Egypt might again, as formerly, support four times its present population, I see no reason to suppose, amidst all the misgovernment and oppression that the people suffer, that they do not still raise food enough to support life and health. I have seen more emaciated, and stunted, and depressed men, women and children in a single walk in England,

than I observed from end to end of the land of Egypt.—So much for the mere food question. No one will suppose that in Egypt a sufficiency of food implies, as with us, a sufficiency of some other things scarcely less important to welfare than food.

We saw this morning a sakia* for the first time,—little thinking how familiar and interesting an object the sakia would become to us in the course of three months, nor how its name would for ever after call up associations of the flowing Nile, and broad green fields, and thickets of sugar-canes, and the melancholy music of the waterwheel, and the picturesque figures of peasant children, driving the oxen in the shady circuit of the weed-grown shed. This, the first we saw, was a most primitive affair, placed among sand hillocks foul with dirt, and its wooden cogwheels in a ruinous state. We presently saw a better one in the garden of the German Consul. It was on a platform, under a trellice of vines. The wheel, which was turned by a blindfolded ox, had rude earthen jars bound on its vanes, its revolutions emptying these jars into a trough, from which the water was conducted to irrigate the garden.

In this garden, as in every field and garden in Egypt, the ground was divided off into compartments, which are surrounded by little ridges, in order to retain whatever water they receive. Where there is artificial irrigation, the water is led along and through these ridges, and distributed thus to every part. I found here the first training of the eye to that angularity which is the main characteristic of form in Egypt. It seems to have been a decree of the old gods of Egypt that angularity

* Waterwheel.

should be a prime law of beauty; and the decree appears to have been undisputed to this day: and one of the most surprising things to a stranger is to feel himself immediately falling into sympathy with this taste, so that he finds in his new sense and ideas of beauty a fitting avenue to the glories of the temples of the Nile.

The gardens of Alexandria looked rude to our European eyes; but we saw few so good afterwards. In the damp plots grew herbs, and especially a kind of mallow, much in use for soups: and cabbages, put in among African fruits. Among great flowering oleanders, Marvel of Peru, figs and oranges, were some familiar plants, cherished, I thought, with peculiar care under the windows of the consular houses;—monthly roses, chrysanthemums, Love-lies-bleeding, geraniums, rosemary, and, of course, the African marigold. Many of these plots are overshadowed by palms,—and they form, in fact, the ground of the palm-orchards, as we used to call them. Large clusters of dates were hanging from under the fronds of the palms; and these were usually the most valuable product of the garden. The consular gardens are not, of course, the most oriental in aspect. We do not see in them, as in those belonging to Arabs, the reservoir for Mohammedan ablution, nor the householder on the margin winding on his turban after his bath, or prostrating himself at his prayers.

The contrast is great between these gardens and the sites of Cleopatra's Needle and Pompey's Pillar,—curiosities which need not be described, as every one has seen them in engravings. The Needle stands on the burning sands, close to the new fortification wall, whose embankment is eighty feet high, and now rapidly

inclosing the town. The companion obelisk, which was offered to England, but not considered worth bringing away, is now buried in this embankment. There it will not decay; for there is no such preservative as the sand of Egypt. When, and under what circumstances, will it again see the light? In a time when it may be recognised as an object known now? or in an age so distant as that the process of verification must be gone over again? Every one now knows that these obelisks are of the time of the early Pharaohs, some of whose names they bear inscribed; that they stood originally at Heliopolis, and were transported to Alexandria by the Cæsars.

The Pillar stands in a yet more desolate place. We reached it through the dreariest of cemeteries, where all was of one dust-colour,—even to the aloe which was fixed upon every grave. The graves were covered with mortar, much of which was broken and torn away. A Christian informant told us that this was done by foxes and dogs; but a Mohammedan declared that such ravage was prevented by careful watching. There is a rare old book which happily throws light on what this Pillar was. In the twelfth century, while the Crusaders were ravaging Syria, a learned physician of Bagdad, named Abdallatif, visited Egypt, and dwelt a considerable time there. He afterwards wrote an admirable account of whatever he himself saw in the country; and his work has been translated by some Arabic scholars. The best translation is by De Sacy (Paris, 1810.)—Abdallatif tells us that the column (now called by us Pompey's Pillar) which is so finely seen from the sea, was called by the Arabs "the pillar of the colonnades:" that he had himself seen the remains of

above four hundred columns of the same material, lying on the margin of the sea: and he tells us how they came there. He declares that the governor of Alexandria, the officer put in charge of the city by Saladeen, had overthrown and broken these columns to make a breakwater! "This," observes Abdallatif, "was the act of a child, or of a man who does not know good from evil." He continues, "I have seen also, round the pillar of the colonnades, considerable remains of these columns; some entire, others broken. It was evident from these remains that the columns had been covered by a roof which they supported. Above the pillar is a cupola supported by it. I believe that this was the Portico where Aristotle taught, and his disciples after him; and that this was the Academy which Alexander erected when he built the city, and where the Library was placed which Amrou burned by the permission of Omar."* De Sacy reminds us that the alleged destruction of this Portico must have taken place, if at all, at most thirty years before the visit of Abdallatif; so that as "all the inhabitants of Alexandria, without exception," assured that traveller of the fact, it would be unreasonable to doubt it.† He decides that here we have the far-famed Serapéum. —From the base of the Pillar the view was curious to novices. The fortifications were rising in long lines, where groups of Arabs were at work in the crumbling, whitish, hot soil; and files of soldiers were keeping watch over them. To the south-east, we had a fine view of Lake Mareotis, whose slender line of shore

* Abdallatif. Relation de l'Egypte. Livre I. ch. 4. † Appendix A.

seemed liable to be broken through by the first ripple of its waters. The space between it and the sea was one expanse of desolation. A strip of vegetation,—some marsh, some field, and some grove,—looked well near the lake; and so did a little settlement on the canal, and a latteen sail, gliding among the trees.

We had a better view than this, one morning, from the fort on Mont Cretin. I believe it is the best point for a survey of the whole district; and our thinking so seemed to give some alarm to the Arabs, who ceased their work to peep at us from behind the ridges, and watch what we did with telescope, map and compass. The whole prospect was bounded by water,—by the sea and Lake Mareotis,—except a little space to the north-east; and that was hidden by an intervening minaret and cluster of houses. Except where some palms arose between us and Lake Mareotis to the south, and where the clustered houses of the town stood up white and clear against the morning sky, there was nothing around us but a hillocky waste, more dreary than the desert because the dreariness here is not natural but induced.—If we could have stood on this spot no longer ago than the times of the Ptolemies (a date which we soon learned to consider somewhat modern) it would have been more difficult to conceive of the present desolation of the scene than it now is to imagine the city in the days of its grandeur. On the one hand, we should have seen, between us and the lake, the circus, with the multitude going to and fro; and on the other, the peopled gymnasia. Where Pompey's Pillar now stands alone, we should have seen the long lines of the colonnades of the magnificent

Serapéum. On the margin of the Old Port, we should then have seen the towers of the noble causeway, the Heptastadium, which connected the island of the Pharos with the mainland. The Great Harbour, now called the New Port, lay afar this day, without a ship or boat within its circuit; and there was nothing but hillocks of bare sand round that bay where there was once a throng of buildings and of people. Thereabouts stood the temple of Arsinoë, and the Theatre, and the Inner Palaces; and there was the market. But now, look where we would, we saw no sign of life but the Arabs at work on the fortifications, and a figure or two in a cemetery near. The work of fortification itself seems absurd, judging by the eye; for there appears nothing to take, and therefore nothing to defend. Except in the direction of the small and poor-looking town, the area within the new walls appears to contain little but dusty spaces and heaps of rubbish, with a few lines of sordid huts, and clumps of palms set down in the midst; and a hot cemetery or two, with its crumbling tombs. I have seen many desolate-looking places, in one country or another; but there is nothing like Alexandria, as seen from a height, for utter dreariness. Our friends there told us they were glad we staid a few days, to see whatever was worth seeing, and be amused with some African novelties; for this was the inhabitants' only chance of inspiring any interest. Nobody comes back to Alexandria that can help it, after having seen the beauty of Cairo, and enjoyed the antiquities of Upper Egypt. The only wonder would be if any one came back to Alexandria who could leave the country in any other way.

Before we quitted Mont Cretin this morning, we looked into a hollow where labourers were digging, and saw them uncover a pillar of red granite,—shining and unblemished. Some were picking away at the massive old Roman walls, for the sake of the brick. It is in such places that the traveller detects himself planning wild schemes for the removal of the dust, and the laying bare of buried cities all along the valley of the Nile.

During the four days of our stay at Alexandria, we saw the usual sights;—the Pasha's palace; the naval arsenal; and the garden of the Greek merchant where the Pasha goes often to breakfast; and we enjoyed the hospitality of several European residents. We also heard a good deal of politics; not a word of which do I mean to write down. There is so much mutual jealousy among the Europeans resident in Egypt, and, under the influence of this jealousy, there is so little hope of a fair understanding and interpretation of the events of the day, that the only chance a stranger has of doing no mischief is by reporting nothing. I have my own impressions, of course, about the political prospects of Egypt, and the character of its alliance with various European powers; but while every word said by any body is caught up and made food for jealousy, and a plea for speculation on the future, the interests of peace and good-will require silence from the passing traveller, whose opinions could hardly, at the best, be worth the rancour which would be excited by the expression of them.

CHAPTER II.

FROM ALEXANDRIA TO CAIRO.—FIRST SIGHT OF THE PYRAMIDS.—PREPARATIONS FOR NILE VOYAGE.

On the 25th of November, we left Alexandria, rising by candle-light at six, and seeing the glorious morning break by the time we were dressed. Our days were now nearly eleven hours long: at the shortest, they would be ten. We were not struck, as we expected to be, by the shortness of the twilight. Instead of the immediate settling down of darkness, after the disappearance of the sun, I found that I could read small print for half an hour after sunset, in our most southerly latitude.

I do not remember to have read of one great atmospheric beauty of Egypt;—the after-glow, as we used to call it. I watched this nightly for ten weeks on the Nile, and often afterwards in the Desert, and was continually more impressed with the peculiarity, as well as the beauty, of this appearance. That the sunset in Egypt is gorgeous, every body knows; but I, for one, was not aware that there is a renewal of beauty, some time after the sun has departed and left all grey. This discharge of colour is here much what it is among the Alps, where the flame-coloured peaks become grey and ghastly as the last sunbeam leaves

them. But here, every thing begins to brighten again in twenty minutes;—the hills are again purple or golden,—the sands orange,—the palms verdant,—the moonlight on the water, a pale green ripple on a lilac surface: and this after-glow continues for ten minutes, when it slowly fades away.

Mr. E. had brought with him his noble dog Pierre, which created a far greater sensation in Alexandria than we did. European men and women are seen every day there; but so large a dog had probably never been known in that region. Women and children, and even men, fled into their houses, or behind walls, at Pierre's approach, every morning during our walks. Pierre was not safe. Between the jealousy of the native dogs, the fears of the Arabs, and the perils of the desert, Pierre had little chance of secure travelling; and so his master sent him home. We left Alexandria without Pierre: but we had a much better servant in the dragoman engaged there by Mr. E.,—Alee Mustafa, — who travelled with us till we reached Alexandria again, the next May, and did his duty by us admirably. He is a native Egyptian, young and strong, able and experienced in his work, and faithful and correct in his money transactions. We met with other travelling parties as content with their dragomen as we were with ours: and I at present remember only one which was cursed with a bad attendant. When we consider what qualifications are requisite in the office, we must see that the dragomen must be a superior class of people. It was one of my amusements to study all whom I met; and when I saw what their knowledge of languages was,—what their

efficiency in daily business, their zeal in travelling, their familiarity with the objects *en route* wherever we went, their temper in times of hurry and disaster, their power of command co-existing with their diligence and kindliness in service, I felt that some of us might look very small in our vocations, in comparison with our dragomen.

We proceeded in an omnibus to the Mahmoudieh Canal, where we went on board the boat which was to carry us to Atfeh, at the junction of the canal with the Nile. The boat was taken in tow by a smaller steamer, named by a wag "the little Asthmatic." We heard a good deal of her ailments,—the cracks in her boiler, and so forth; so that we hardly expected to reach Atfeh in due course.—The villas in the neighbourhood of Alexandria are pleasantly surrounded with gardens, and fenced by hedges or palings hung with the most luxuriant creepers; but the houses are of glaring white, and look dreadfully hot.—The villages on the banks are wretched-looking beyond description; the mud huts square, or in bee-hive form; so low and clustered and earthy, that they suggest the idea of settlements of ants or beavers, rather than of human beings. Yet we were every few minutes meeting boats coming down from the country with produce,—various kinds of grain and roots, in heavy cargoes. Some of these boats were plastered with mud, like the houses; and so thickly that grass grew abundantly on their sides.—On the heaps of grain were squatted muffled women and naked children; naked men towed the boats,—now on the bank, and now wading in the mud; and muffled women came out of the villages to

stare. To-day there seemed to be no medium between wrapping up and nakedness; but it became common, up the country, to see women and girls covering their faces with great anxiety, while they had scarcely any clothing elsewhere.

We saw the other extreme of dress in a passenger on board our boat;—the chief eunuch of the royal hareem at Cairo. Neither his beautiful dress,—of the finest cloth, amply embroidered,—nor his attendants and appliances could impress me with the slightest sense of dignity in the case of this extraordinary-looking being. He was quiet in his manners, conversed with apparent ease, said his prayers and made his prostrations duly on the top of the kitchen, telling his beads with his long and skinny fingers; but his emaciation and ugliness baffled all the usual associations with the outward signs of rank. I could not think of him as an official of high station.

This is the canal which, as every body knows, cost the lives of above twenty thousand people, from the Pasha's hurry to have it finished, and the want of due preparation for such a work in such a country. Without tools and sufficient food, the poor creatures brought here by compulsion to work died off rapidly under fatigue and famine. Before the improvements of the Pasha are vaunted in European periodicals as putting European enterprizes to shame, it might be as well to ascertain their cost,—in other things as well as money;—the taxes of pain and death, as well as of piastres, which are levied to pay for the Pasha's public works. There must be some ground for the horror which impels a whole population to such practices as

are every day seen in Egypt, to keep out of the reach and the ken of government:—practices such as putting out an eye, pulling out the teeth necessary for biting cartridges, and cutting off a forefinger, to incapacitate men for army service. The fear of every other sort of conscription, besides that for the supply of the army, is no less urgent; and it is a common practice for parents to incapacitate their children for reading and writing by putting out an eye, and cutting off the forefinger of the right hand. Any misfortune is to be encountered rather than that of entering the Pasha's army, the Pasha's manufactories, the Pasha's schools. This can hardly be all baseless folly on the part of the people. If questioned, they could at least point to the twenty-three thousand deaths which took place in six months, in the making of the Mahmoudieh Cana

The Pasha is proud of this canal, as men usually are of achievements for which they have paid extravagantly. And he still brings his despotic will to bear upon it, in defiance of nature and circumstance. I was told to-day of his transmission of Lord Hardinge by it, when Lord Hardinge and every body else believed the canal to be impassable from want of water. This want of water was duly represented to the Pasha: but as he still declared that Lord Hardinge should go by that way and no meaner one, Lord Hardinge had only to wait and see how it would be managed. He went on board the steamer at Alexandria, and proceeded some way, when a bar of dry ground appeared extending across the canal. But this little inconvenience was to be no impediment. A thousand soldiers appeared on the banks, who waded to the steamer, and fairly

shouldered it, with all its passengers, and carried it over the bar. The same thing happened at the next dry place, and the next: and thus the Pasha is able to say that he forwarded Lord Hardinge by his own steamer on his own great canal.

Nothing can be more dreary than the scenery till within a short distance of Atfeh. The field of Aboukeer was nothing but hillocky desert, with pools in the hollows: and after that, we saw little but brown mud banks, till we came to the acacias near Atfeh. It is a pity that other parts of the canal banks are not planted in the same way. Besides the beauty of the trees,—to-day very pretty, with the light pods contrasting with the dark foliage,—the shade for man and beast, and the binding of the soil by vegetation, would be valuable.

It was dusk before we reached Atfeh. Some moonlight mingled with the twilight, and with the yellow gleams which came from sordid windows, seen through the rigging of a crowd of small vessels. There was prodigious bustle and vociferation while we were passing through the lock, and getting on board the steamer which was to carry us to Cairo. But by seven o'clock we were fairly off on the broad and placid Nile. The moonlight was glorious; and the whole company of passengers sat or lay on deck, not minding the crowding in their enjoyment of the scene, till the dews became so heavy as to send down all who could find room in the cabins.—I have a vivid recollection of that first evening on the Nile,—an evening full of enjoyment, though perhaps every other evening I spent on it showed me more. I saw little but the wide quiet

river,—the broadest, I believe, that I had ever been on; and a fringe of palms on the banks, with here and there a Sheikh's tomb* hiding among them, or a tall white minaret springing above them.

Two ladies kindly offered me a place in their inner cabin, where I could lie down and have the benefit of an open window: but the place was too unclean for rest. At 3 A.M. we went a-ground on a mud bank. I saw the quivering poles of the Arab crew from my window, and was confounded by the noise overhead,—the luggage being shifted with all possible outcry. We just floated for a minute, and then stuck fast again. By the cessation of the noise, I presently found that the matter was given up till daylight; and I slept for above an hour;—a very desirable thing, as these groundings made it appear uncertain whether we should reach Cairo before another night.

When I went on deck, before seven, I found we were opposite Sais. But there was nothing to be done. No one could go ashore; and the best consolation is that there is nothing to be seen there by those who can only mourn over the mounds, and not penetrate them. A mob of Arabs was brought down to our aid; and a curious scene was that of our release. On deck our luggage was piled without any order; and blankets were stuffed in among trunks and bags. From these blankets emerged one fellow-passenger after another, till the set of unshaven and unwashed gentry was complete. In the river was a long line of naked Arabs,

* These Sheikhs' tombs are very like village ovens: square huts, with each a white cupola rising from the walls.

tugging and toiling and screaming till the vessel floated. When we were once more steaming towards Cairo, and the deck was cleared, and the wondrous atmosphere assumed all its glory, and the cool wind breathed upon our faces, we presently forgot the discomforts of the night, and were ready for a day of novelty and charm.

Breakfast was served on deck, under an awning; and greatly was it enjoyed by one of the passengers,—a catholic lady of rank, who was travelling absolutely alone, and shifting for herself very successfully. She helped herself to an entire chicken, every bone of which she picked. While doing so, she was disturbed by the waiters passing behind her, between the two tables; and she taught them by vigorous punches what it was to interfere with her elbows while they were wanted for cutting up her chicken. Immediately after this feat, she went to the cabin, and kneeled down to her prayers, in the face of as many as chose to see. Between this Countess and the Eunuch, there was more religious demonstration on board than we had been accustomed to see in such places.

Till 3 P.M. there was little variety in the scenery. I was most struck with the singular colouring;—the diversity of browns. There was the turbid river, of vast width, rolling between earthy banks; and on these banks were mud villages, with their conical pigeon-houses. The minarets and Sheikhs' tombs were fawn-coloured and white; and the only variety from these shades of the same colour was in the scanty herbage, which was so coarse as to be almost of no colour at all. But the distinctness of outline, the glow of the brown, and the vividness of light and shade, were truly a feast

to the eye.—At 3 o'clock, when approaching Werdán, we saw large spreading acacias growing out of the dusty soil; and palms were clustered thickly about the town; and at last we had something beyond the banks to look at;—a sandy ridge which extends from Tunis to the Nile.—When we had passed Werdán, about 4 P.M., Mr. E. came to me with a mysterious countenance, and asked me if I should like to be the first to see the Pyramids. We stole past the groups of careless talkers, and went to the bows of the boat, where I was mounted on boxes and coops, and shown where to look. In a minute I saw them, emerging from behind a sandhill. They were very small; for we were still twenty-five miles from Cairo; but there could be no doubt about them for a moment; so sharp and clear were the light and shadow on the two sides we saw. I had been assured that I should be disappointed in the first sight of the Pyramids; and I had maintained that I could not be disappointed, as of all the wonders of the world, this is the most literal, and, to a dweller among mountains, like myself, the least imposing. I now found both my informant and myself mistaken. So far from being disappointed, I was filled with surprise and awe: and so far was I from having anticipated what I saw, that I felt as if I had never before looked upon any thing so new as those clear and vivid masses, with their sharp blue shadows, standing firm and alone on their expanse of sand. In a few minutes, they appeared to grow wonderfully larger; and they looked lustrous and most imposing in the evening light.—This impression of the Pyramids was never fully renewed. I admired them every evening from my window at

Cairo; and I took the surest means of convincing myself of their vastness by going to the top of the largest; but this first view of them was the most moving: and I cannot think of it now without emotion.

Between this time and sunset, the most remarkable thing was the infinity of birds. I saw a few pelicans and many cormorants; but the flocks,—I might say the shoals—of wild ducks and geese which peopled the air, gave me a stronger impression of the wildness of the country, and the foreign character of the scenery, than any thing I had yet seen.—We passed by moonlight the spot where the great experiment of the Barrage is to be tried; and here we could distinguish the point of the Delta, and the junction of the other branch, and knew when we had issued upon the single Nile.—Soon after, the groves of Shoobra,—the Pasha's country palace,—rose against the sky, on the eastern shore. Then there were glimmerings of white houses; and then rows of buildings and lights which told of our approach to Boolák, the port of Cairo. The palace of Ismael Pasha, who was burnt at Sennaar twenty-nine years ago, rose above the bank; and then there was a blaze of cressets, which showed where we were to land. A carriage from the Hotel d'Orient awaited our party; and we were driven, under an avenue of acacias, a mile or two to Cairo. By the way, we saw some truly Arabian dwellings by torchlight, which made us long for the morrow.

In the morning I found that my windows looked out upon the Ezbekeeyeh,—the great Square,—all trees and shade, this sunny morning; and over the tree tops rose the Pyramids, apparently only a stone's throw off, though in fact more than ten miles distant. A low

canal runs round the Square, just under my windows; and on its bank was a striking group,—a patriarchal picture;—an Arab leading down his flock of goats to water. The sides of this canal were grass-grown; and the interior of the Square, the area of 400,000 feet within the belt of trees, was green with shrubs, field-crops, and gardens. While I was gazing upon this new scene, and amusing myself with the appearance and gestures of the people who went by on foot, on asses, or on camels, Mr. Y. and Mr. E. were gone to Boolák, to see about a boat which we had heard of as likely to suit us for our voyage up to the First Cataract. At breakfast they brought us the news that they had engaged the boat, with its crew. We afterwards mounted donkeys, and rode off to Boolák to examine this boat, which has the reputation of being the best on the Nile.

As our thoughts and our time were much engaged with the anticipation of our voyage and with preparations for it, so that we did not now see much of Cairo, or open our minds thoroughly to what we did see, I shall say nothing here of the great Arabian city. With me it stands last in interest, as latest in time, of the sights of Egypt: and any account that I can give of it will be the more truthful for coming in its right place,—after the cities of the ancient world.

We found on board our dahabieh the old American merchant to whom it belongs,—his tawny finger graced by a magnificent diamond ring. The Rais,—the captain of the crew, who is responsible for the safety of the boat,—was in waiting to take directions from us about some additional accommodation. We liked this man

from first to last. His countenance struck me this morning as being fine, notwithstanding a slight squint. It had much of the pathetic expression of the Arab countenance, with strong sense, and, on occasion, abundance of fire. His caution about injuring the boat made him sometimes appear indolent when we wanted to push on; and he, seeming to indulge us, would yet moor within half-an-hour: but he worked well with the crew at times,—taking an oar, and handling the ropes himself. For many an hour of our voyage, he sat on the gunwale, singing to the rowers some mournful song, to which they replied in a chorus yet more mournful. The manners of this man were as full of courtesy and kindness as we almost invariably found the manners of the Arabs to be; and there was even an unusual degree of the oriental dignity in his bearing.

The boat was so clean that there was no occasion for us to wait for the usual process of sinking,—to drown vermin. The few additions and alterations necessary could easily be made while we were buying our stores; and, in fact, we were off in five days. Our deck afforded a walk of twelve paces, when the crew were not rowing: and this spacious deck was covered with an awning. The first cabin was quite a saloon. It had a continuous row of windows, and a deewán along each side; on the broadest of which the gentlemen's beds were made up at night. We had bookshelves put up here; and there was ample closet accommodation,—for medicines, pickles, tools, paper and string, &c. In the inner cabin, the narrow deewáns were widened by a sort of shelf put up to contain the bedding of Mrs. Y. and myself. The floor and ceiling were painted blue, orange and green,

and the many windows had Venetian blinds. It was a truly comfortable chamber, which we inhabited with perfect satisfaction for many weeks.

The bargain made, the gentlemen and Alee were much engaged every day in laying in stores. Mattresses and spices, wine and crockery, maccaroni, camp-stools, biscuits, candles, a table, fruit, sponges, sauce-pans, soap, cordage, tea and sugar;—here are a few items of the multitude that had to be attended to. Every morning, the gentlemen were off early to the stores; and the time they gave to sight-seeing with Mrs. Y. and me was accepted as a great favour. Active as we thought them, it was an amusement to us to see that it was possible to be more active still. A young Scotchman who was at our hotel, with a sister and two friends, was always before us, however early we might be, and obtained the first choice of everything, from the dahabieh herself to the smallest article she carried. And all this activity and shrewdness lay under a pale young face, a quiet voice and languid manner, betokening poor health, if not low spirits. On the night of our arrival at Cairo, we did not go to bed till past midnight; and our gentlemen were out at five to see about the dahabieh,—knowing that the competition for boats was then very keen: but the Scotchman had been out at four, and had seen and declined the dahabieh before my friends reached Boolák. Whenever we bought any article, we found that our Scotch neighbour had had his choice before us. We seldom went into the store where we obtained almost everything but he was sitting there, tasting wines or preserves, or handling utensils as if he had been a furniture-monger all his life. It was

presently apparent that he was bent on getting off before us,—on obtaining a good start up the river; and it is not to be denied that this roused the combativeness of some of our party; and that our preparations were pressed forward with some view to the question whether the English or Scotch party would get the start. The expectation was that the Scotch would sail on Tuesday, December 1st, and an American party the same day; while we could not get off till the Wednesday morning, though taking up our abode on board our dahabieh on the Tuesday evening. We were advised to do this, that we might not depart unfurnished with some essential but forgotten article, as was the case with a party who set sail with a fair wind, and were carried exulting up the river for twenty miles, when they found they had no candles. To our surprise, the Scotch party appeared at the late dinner on Tuesday; and when we accompanied the ladies to their rooms afterwards, to see the shady bonnets they were making for tropical wear, we found they were waiting for the washerman, who had disappointed them of their clothes. So we left the hotel before them.

It was bright moonlight when we set off for Boolák,—a curious cavalcade. Of course, we were on donkeys; as were such of our goods as had not been removed before. The donkey boys carried,—one, my desk, another, the arrow-root, and a third, the chocolate. It was a merry ride, under the acacias, whose flickering shadows were cast across the road by the clear moon. The tea-things were set in the cabin when we arrived. There was less confusion on board than might have been expected; and we had a comfortable night.

Our crew consisted of fourteen, including the Rais. Of these, five were Nubians, and the rest Cairenes. We had besides, our dragoman, Alee, and his assistant, Hasan; and the cook,—a grotesque and amusing personage. The hire of the boat and crew, who provided themselves with food, was 40*l.* per month. Times are changed since some acquaintance of ours went up to the Second Cataract, two years since, for 12*l.* Those of our crew who afforded us the most amusement were some of the Cairenes: but we liked best the quiet and peaceable Nubians. When we set off, the whole crew messed together, sitting on their haunches in a circle round their pan of lentile or dourrha pottage. But before we returned, the Cairenes had all quarrelled; and the five Nubians were eating together, as amicably as ever, while each Cairene was picking his bread by himself.

When I came on deck in the morning, I found that we were not to start till the afternoon, and that we must put up with extraordinary confusion till then. There was abundant employment for us all, however, and after breakfast, the gentlemen went up to the city, to make some more purchases, and Mrs. Y. and I sat on deck, under the awning, making a curtain for the cabin, a table-cover, &c. The doings of the Arabs on shore were amusing and interesting enough. Among others, I saw a blind man bringing, as he would say, his donkey down to drink; but the donkey led the man. The creature went carefully down the steep and rough bank, and the man followed, keeping his hands on its hind quarters, and scarcely making a false step.—The Scotch party came down, in the course of the morning,

and presently put off, and went full sail up the river. The American boat was, I believe, already gone. Soon after three, Alee announced that the last crate of fowls was on board; the signal was given, and away we went.

CHAPTER III.

NILE INCIDENTS. — CREW. — BIRDS. — FACE OF THE COUNTRY. — THE HEAVENS. — TOWNS AND SHORES, BETWEEN CAIRO AND ASYOOT.

As we swept up the broad river, we passed some fine houses, sheltered by dark masses of acacias; and presenting, to the river, spacious overhanging balconies, and picturesque water-wheels. My friends said this was very like the Bosphorus. Presently, Cairo arose in the distance, backed by the white citadel and the yellow range of the Mokuttam hills, with their finely broken outline. On the western shore was El Geezeh, with its long range of hospital buildings, relieved by massy foliage, behind which towered the Pyramids; and further on were more Pyramids, lessening in the distance. We were aground once and again within an hour; and while we were at dinner, we drove upon a shoal with a great shock. This was not the way to overtake the Scotch party, whose boat could not be supposed ever to get aground; and our Rais was informed that if he stuck again, he should be bastinadoed.—The wind was too fresh to allow of our dining on deck; and the sun was declining behind the palms when we went down to the cabin.—When we came up again, the yellow glow remained, while the rich foliage

of the eastern shore was quivering in the moonlight. Jupiter was as lustrous as if there had been no moon. The breeze now fell, now rose; and the crew set up their wild music,—the pipe and drum, with intervals of mournful song.

I do not know whether all the primitive music in the world is in the minor key: but I have been struck by its prevalence among all the savage, or half-civilised, or uneducated people whom I have known. The music of Nature is all in the minor key;—the melodies of the winds, the sea, the waterfall, birds, and the echoes of bleating flocks among the hills: and human song seems to follow this lead, till men are introduced at once into the new world of harmony and the knowledge of music in the major key. Our crew sang always in unison, and had evidently no conception of harmony. I often wished that I could sing loud enough to catch their ear, amidst their clamour, that I might see whether my second would strike them with any sense of harmony: but their overpowering noise made any such attempt hopeless.—We are accustomed to find or make the music which we call spirit-stirring in the major key: but their spirit-stirring music, set up to encourage them at the oar, is all of the same pathetic character as the most doleful, and only somewhat louder and more rapid. They kept time so admirably, and were so prone to singing, that we longed to teach them to substitute harmony for noise, and meaning for mere sensation. The nonsense that they sing is provoking. When we had grown sad under the mournful swell of their song, and were ready for any wildness of sentiment, it was vexatious to learn from Alee what

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they were singing about. Once it was "Put the saddle on the horse. Put the saddle on the horse. And this was all. Sometimes it was "Pull harder. Pull harder." This was expanded into a curious piece of Job's comfort, one evening when they had been rowing all day, and must have been very weary. "Pull hard: pull harder. The nearer you come to Alexandria, the harder you will have to pull. God give help!" Another song might be construed by some vigilant people near the court to have a political meaning. "We have seen the Algerine bird singing on the walls of Alexandria." Another was, "The bird in the tree sings better than we do. The bird comes down to the river to wash itself." The concluding song of the voyage was the best, as to meaning, though not as to music,—in which I must say I preferred the pathetic chaunt about the horse and saddle. As we were approaching Cairo on our return, they sang "This is nearly our last day on the river, and we shall soon be at the city. He who is tired of rowing may go ashore, and sit by the sakia in the shade." I may observe that if the dragoman appears unwilling to translate any song, it is as well not to press for it; for it is understood that many of their words are such as it would give European ears no pleasure to hear.

The water-wagtails were very tame, we observed already. They ran about on the deck, close to our feet as we sat, and looked in at our cabin windows in the most friendly manner. Next morning, we began to acquire some notion of the multitude of birds we were to see in Egypt;—a notion which, I think, could hardly be obtained anywhere else. On a spit of sand,

I saw when I came forth, a flock of pelicans which defied counting, while a flight, no less large, was hovering above. A heron was standing fishing on another point: clouds of pigeons rose above every group of dwellings and clump of palms; and multitudes of geese occupied the air at various heights;—now in strings which extended almost half across the sky,—and now furling and unfurling their line like an immeasurable pennon. The birds of Egypt did not appear to us to be in great variety, or remarkable beauty; but from their multitude, and being seen in all their wildness, they were everywhere a very interesting feature of the scenery. The ostrich I never saw, except tame, in a farmyard; though we had ostrich's eggs in Nubia. We came upon an eagle here and there,—and always where we could most wish to see one. Sometimes, when in the temples, and most interested in the monuments, I caught myself thinking of home, and traced the association to the sparrows which were chirping overhead. I found swallows' nests in these temples, now and then, in a chink of the wall, or a recess of roof or niche. A devout soul of an old Egyptian, returning from its probation of three thousand years, would see that "the sparrow had found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she might lay her young;"—even the altars of the Lord God, so sacred once to the most imposing worship the world ever saw. Vultures are not uncommon. I used to see them sometimes during my early walk on shore, busy about the skull of some dead horse or other carcase. The crested woodpecker was often a pretty object among the mournful piles of ruins at Thebes or elsewhere, hopping about so

spruce and gay! Where the Arabian hills approached the river, or the shores presented perpendicular rocks, long rows of cormorants sat perched before their holes, as still and staid as so many hermits in contemplation. On every islet and jutting point were flocks of pelicans, whose plumage looked snow-white when set off by a foil of black geese: and now and then, a single bird of this tribe might be seen in the early morning, balancing itself on the little billows, and turning its head about in the coyest manner, to prevent its long beak touching the water. The ibis is elegant in form, and most delicate in plumage, as every one knows who has stroked its snowy feathers. It looked best when standing under the banks, or wading among the reeds in a cove. It looked most strange and out of place when perched on the back of a buffalo, as I occasionally saw it. We once saw five buffalo in one field, with each a delicate white ibis perched on its back. And from the nose of one of these buffalo two little birds were at the same time picking insects, or something else that they relished.

As to the birds which have such a mysterious connexion with the sleeping crocodile, I can give no new information about them. I can only say that on almost every occasion of our seeing a crocodile, two or three of these birds were standing beside him; and that I never saw them fly away till he had moved. It is believed in the country that these birds relieve the crocodile of the little leeches which infest his throat; and that they keep watch while he sleeps on the sand, and give him warning to escape on the approach of danger. What the crocodile does for the birds in return, we never

heard. As for the pigeons, they abound beyond the conception of any traveller who has not seen the pigeon flights of the United States. They do not here, as there, darken the air in an occasional process of migration, breaking down young trees on which they alight, and lying in heaps under the attack of a party of sportsmen: but they flourish every where as the most prolific of birds may do under the especial protection of man. The best idea that a stranger can form of their multitude is by supposing such a bird population as that of the doves of Venice inhabiting the whole land of Egypt. The houses of the villages throughout Egypt are surmounted by a sort of battlements built for the pigeons, and supplied with fringes of boughs, inserted, in several rows to each house, for the birds to rest on. The chief object is the dung, which is required for manure for the garden, and for other purposes: but it is a mistake to say that the inhabitants do not eat them. They are taken for food, but not to such an extent as to interfere with the necessary supply of dung. One of our party occasionally shot a few wild ones, near the villages; and he met with no hindrance. But it was otherwise with our Scotch friend. Though he had asked leave, and believed he had obtained it, to let fly upon the pigeons in a village, the inhabitants rose upon him; and his Rais had some difficulty in securing his safe return to his boat. He did it by a device which his employer was shocked to hear of afterwards. He declared our friend to be the Pasha's dentist! To form a notion of the importance of this functionary, it is necessary to remember that the Pasha's having a dentist is one of the most remarkable

signs of our times. That a Mohammedan ruler should have permitted his beard to be handled is a token of change more extraordinary than the adoption of the Frank dress in Turkey, or the introduction of wine at Mohammedan dinners: and the man who was permitted by the Pasha to touch his beard must be regarded throughout the country as a person inestimably powerful with his Highness. Such a personage was our Scotch friend compelled to appear, for some way up the river; and very reluctant he was to bear the dignity to which his assent had not been asked.— A pretty bird of the kingfisher kind apparently, coloured black, grey and tawny, was flitting about on the shore when I took my first walk on shore this morning. And I think I have now mentioned nearly all the birds we observed in the course of our voyage.

Our object, like that of Egyptian travellers generally, was to sail up the river as fast as the wind would carry us, seeing by the way only as much as would not interfere with the progress of the boat. It was the season when the north wind prevailed; and this advantage was not to be trifled with in a voyage of a thousand miles, certain as we were of the help of the current to bring us back. We were therefore to explore no pyramids or temples on our way up; and to see only so much of the country as we could get a glimpse of on occasion of the failure of the wind, or other accidental delays. To this there was no objection in our minds; for we found at once that in going up the Nile in any manner we should meet with as much novelty and interest as we could bear. The face of the country was enough at one time. To have explored its monuments

immediately would have been too much. Moreover, there was great advantage in going up quickly while the river was yet high enough to afford some view of the country. In returning, we found such a change produced by the sinking of the waters only a few feet, that we felt that travellers going up late in the season can hardly be said to have seen the country from the river. At all times, the view of the interior from the Nile must be very imperfect, and quite insufficient to justify any decision against the beauty of the great valley. This arises from the singular structure of the country. Everywhere else, where a river flows through the centre of a valley, the land either slopes from the base of the hills down to the river, or it is level. In Egypt, on the contrary, the land rises from the mountains up to the banks of the Nile: and where, as usually happens, the banks are higher than the eye of the spectator on the deck of his boat, all view of the interior, as far as the hills, is precluded. He sees nothing but the towns, villages, and palm-groves on the banks, and the mountains on the horizon. My attention had been directed upon this point before I went by the complaints of some readers of Eastern travels that, after all their reading, they knew no more what the Egyptian valley looked like than if it had never been visited. As this failure of description appeared to regard Egypt alone, there must be some peculiar cause for it: and thus we found it. The remedy was, of course, to go ashore as often as possible, and to mount every practicable eminence. I found this so delightful, and every wide view that I obtained included so much that was wonderful and beautiful, that mounting

eminences became an earnest pursuit with me. I carried compass and note-book, and noted down what I saw, from eminence to eminence, along the whole valley, from Cairo to the Second Cataract. Sometimes I looked abroad from the top of a pylon; sometimes from a rock on the banks; sometimes from a sandy ridge of the desert; sometimes from a green declivity of the interior; once from a mountain above Thebes, and once from the summit of the Great Pyramid. My conclusion is that I differ entirely from those who complain of the sameness of the aspect of the country. The constituent features of the landscape may be more limited in number than in other tracts of country of a thousand miles: but they are so grand and so beautiful, so strange, and brought together in such endless diversity, that I cannot conceive that any one who has really seen the country can complain of its monotony. Each panoramic survey that I made is now as distinct in my mind as the images I retain of Niagara, Iona, Salisbury Plain, the Valais, and Lake Garda.

Our opportunities of going ashore were not few, even at the beginning of our voyage, when the wind was fair, and we sailed on, almost continuously, for three days. In the early mornings, one of the crew was sent for milk, and he was to be taken up at a point further on. And if, towards night, the Rais feared a rock, or a windy reach ahead, he would moor at sunset; and this allowed us nearly an hour before it was dark enough for us to mind the howling jackals. When the wind ceased to befriend us, the crew had to track almost all day, following the bends of the river; and we could either follow these also, or strike across the fields

to some distant point of the bank. And when on board, there was so much to be seen on the ordinary banks that I was rarely in the cabin. Before breakfast, I was walking the deck. After breakfast, I was sewing, reading, or writing, or idling on deck, under the shade of the awning. After dinner, we all came out eagerly, to enjoy the last hour of sunshine, and the glories of the sunset and the after-glow, and the rising of the moon and constellations. And sorry was I every night when it was ten o'clock, and I must go under a lower roof than that of the dazzling heavens. All these hours of our first days had their ample amusement from what we saw on the banks alone, till we could penetrate further.

There were the pranks of the crew, whose oddities were unceasing, and particularly rich in the early morning. Then it was that they mimicked whatever they saw us do,—sometimes for the joke, but as often with the utmost seriousness. I sometimes thought that they took certain of our practices for religious exercises. The solemnity with which one or another tried to walk the deck rapidly, to dance, and to skip the rope, looked like this. The poor fellow who laid hands on the skipping-rope paid (he probably thought) the penalty of his impiety. At the first attempt, down he came, flat on his face. If Mr. E. looked through his glass, some Ibraheem or Mustafa would snatch up an oar for a telescope, and see marvellous things in the plain. If, in the heat, either of the gentlemen nodded over his book, half the crew would go to sleep instantly, peeping every moment to see the effect.—Then, there were the veiled women coming down to

the river to fill their water-pots. Or the men, at prayer-time, performing their ablutions and prostrations. And there was the pretty sight of the preparation of the drying banks for the new crop;—the hoeing with the short, heavy antique hoe. And the harrow, drawn by a camel, would appear on the ridge of the bank. And the working of the Shadoofs* was perpetual, and always interesting. Those who know what the shadoof is like, may conceive the picture of its working:—the almost naked Arabs,—usually in pairs,—lowering and raising their skin buckets by the long lever overhead, and emptying them into the trough beside them, with an observance of time as regular as in their singing. Where the bank is high, there is another pair of shadoofs at work above and behind: and sometimes a third, before the water can be sent flowing in its little channels through the fields.—Then, there were the endless manœuvres of innumerable birds, about the islets and rocks: and a buffalo, here and there, swimming from bank to bank, and finding it, at last, no easy matter to gain the land.—Then, there was the ferryboat, with its ragged sail, and its motley freight of turbaned men, veiled women, naked children, brown sheep, frightened asses, and imperturbable buffalo.—Then, there were the long palisades of sugar canes edging the banks; or the steep slopes, all soft and bright with the springing wheat or the bristling lupins. Then, there were the villages, with their somewhat pyramidal houses, their clouds of pigeons, and their shelter of palms: or, here and there, a town, with its

* Pole and bucket, for raising water.

minarets rising out of its cincture of acacia. And it was not long before we found our sight sharpened to discern holes in the rocks, far or near;—holes so squared at the entrance as to hint of sculpture or painting within.—And then, as the evening drew on, there was the sinking of the sun, and the coming out of the colours which had been discharged by the glare in the middle of the day. The vast and dreary and hazy Arabian desert became yellow, melting into the purple hills; the muddy waters took a lilac hue; and the shadows of the sharp-cut banks were as blue as the central sky. As for the moon, we could, for the first time in our lives, see her the first night;—the slenderest thread of light, of cup-like form, visible for a few minutes after sunset; the old moon being so clearly marked as to be seen by itself after the radiant rim was gone. I have seen it behind a palm, or resting on the ridge of a mountain like a copper ball. And when the fuller moon came up from the east, and I, forgetting the clearness of the sky, have been struck by the sudden dimness, and have looked up to watch her passing behind a cloud, it was delicious to see, instead of any cloud, the fronds of a palm waving upon her disk. One night, I saw an appearance perfectly new to me. No object was perceptible on the high black eastern bank, above and behind which hung the moon: but in her golden track on the dimpled waters were the shadows of palms, single and in clusters, passing over swiftly,—"authentic tidings of invisible things." And then, there was the rising of Orion. I have said that the constellations were less conspicuous than at home, from the universal brilliancy of the sky: but Orion

shone forth, night by night, till the punctual and radiant apparition became almost oppressive to the watching sense. I came at last to know his first star as it rose clear out of the bank. He never issued whole from a haze on the horizon, as at home. As each star rose, it dropped a duplicate upon the surface of the still waters: and on a calm night, it was hard to say which Orion was the brightest.—And how different was the wind from our cloud-laden winds in England! Except that it carried us on, I did not like wind in Egypt. The palms, bowed from their graceful height, and bent all one way, are as ugly as trees can be: and the dust flies in clouds, looking like smoke or haze on land, and settling on our faces, even in the middle of the stream. Though called sand, it is, for the most part, mere dust from the limestone ranges, forming mud when moistened. The wind served, however, to show us a sand-pillar now and then, like a column of smoke moving slowly along the ground. On this second day of our voyage, when we were approaching Benisooeef, the wind made ugly what on a calm evening would have been lovely. A solitary house, in the midst of a slip of alluvial land, all blown upon with dust, looked to us the most dreary of dwellings. But the latteen sails on the river were a pretty feature,—one or two at a time, winding in and out, with the bends of the stream. We saw one before us near Benisooeef, this day. It proved to be our Scotch friends. Our boat beat his in a strong wind; and we swept past in good style,—the gentlemen uncapping and bowing; the ladies waving their handkerchiefs. I had no idea that the racing spirit had entered into

them, till one of the ladies told me, the next time we met, "We were so mortified when you passed us!"

Benisooeef is about eighty miles from Cairo: a good progress for twenty-three hours! It is the largest town in Upper Egypt: but it does not look very imposing from the river. Two or three minarets rise from it; and there is one rather good-looking house, which the Pasha inhabits when he comes. Its aspect was pretty as we looked back to it from the south.

The wind carried us on towards the rocky region where our careful Rais would retard our progress by night, though we had a glorious lamp in the moon, the whole night through. We had a rocky shore to the east this afternoon,—the Arabian mountains approaching the river: and in the early morning, we passed the precipitous cliffs, on whose flat summit stands the Coptic convent of "Our Lady Mary the Virgin." The forms of these limestone cliffs are most fantastic; and fantastic was the whole scene;—the long rows of cormorants in front of their holes,—a sort of burlesque upon the monks in their cells above; the unconnected flights of steps here and there on the rocks; the women and naked children on the ridge, giving notice to the begging monks of our approach; and the monks themselves, leaping and racing down the precipice, and then, two of them, racing through the water, struggling with the strong current, to board us for baksheesh. The one who succeeded was quite satisfied, in the midst of his panting and exhaustion, with five paras* and an empty bottle. He waited a little, till we had gone

* Five paras are a farthing and one-fifth.

about a mile, in order to have the help of the current, and then swam off to his convent.

We passed the pretty town of Minyeh about noon; and then entered upon sugar districts so rich as to make one speculate whether this might not be, some day, one of the great sugar-producing regions of the world. The soil is very rich, and irrigated by perpetually recurring shadoofs: and the crops of canes on the flats between the rocks and the river were very fine, and extending onwards for some days from this time. The tall chimnies of the Rauda sugar manufactory stood up above the wood on a promontory, looking very strange amidst such a scene.—On our return, we visited the sugar manufactory at Hou, and learned something of the condition and prospects of the manufacture. The Hou establishment belongs to Ibraheem Pasha, whom we met there at seven in the morning. It is quite new; and a crowd of little children were employed in the unfinished part, carrying mortar in earthen bowls for 1*d.* per day. The engineers are French, and the engine, one hundred-and-twenty horse power, was made at Paris. The managers cannot have here the charcoal they use in France for clarifying the juice. From the scarcity of wood, charcoal is too dear; and burnt bones are employed instead,—answering the purpose very well. We saw the whole process, which seemed cleverly managed; and the gentlemen pronounced the quality of the sugar good. An Englishman employed there said, however, that the canes were inferior to those of the West Indies, for want of rain. There were a hundred people at work in this establishment; their wages being, besides food, a piastre and a

quarter (nearly 3*d.*) per day. If, however, the payment of wages is managed here as I shall have to show it is usually done in Egypt, the receipts of the work-people must be considered much less than this. We heard so much of the complaints of the people at having to buy, under compulsion, coarse and dear sugar, that it is clear that much improvement in management must take place before Egypt can compete with other sugar-producing countries: but still, what we saw of the extensive growth of the cane, and the quality of the produce, under great disadvantages, made us look upon this as one of the great future industrial resources of Egypt.

The next morning, we could still distinguish the tall chimney of Rauda. We had been at anchor under a bank all night, the Rais being in fear of a rock a-head. The minarets of Melawee were on a flat on the western bank, some way before us: and between us and them, lay the caves of Benee Hasan;—those wonderful repositories of monumental records of the old Egyptians, which we were to explore on our return, but must now pass by, as if they were no more than what they looked, —mere apertures in the face of the mountains.

The crew were tracking this morning, for the first time;—stepping along at a funeral pace, and slipping off, one by one, to light a pipe where four or five smokers were puffing in a circle, among the sugar-canes. Our crew never appeared tired with their tracking; but in the mornings they were slow; and the man who was sent for milk moved very lazily,—whether the one chosen were the briskest or the quietest of the company. The cook was rather too deliberate about breakfast,

and Alee himself was not a good riser. It was their winter; and cold makes the Arabs torpid instead of brisk. Presently, we had to cross to the more level bank; and then we first saw our people row. It was very ridiculous. They sang at the top of their voices, some of them throwing their heads back, shutting their eyes, and shaking their heads at every quaver, most pathetically,—dipping their oars the while as if they were skimming milk, and all out of time with their singing, and with one another, while their musical time was perfectly good.—The wind presently freshened, and we stood away. It was fitful all day, but blew steadily when the moon rose. Just then, however, the Rais took fright about passing the next point at night, and we moored, beside four other boats, in the deep shadow of a palm-grove. On these occasions, two men of the neighbourhood and a dog are appointed to guard each boat that moors to the bank. The boat pays three piastres;* and if any thing is lost, complaint is made to the Governor of the district, whose business it is to recover the property, and punish the guards.

As we approached Manfaloot, we could perceive how strangely old Nile has gone out of his course, as if for the purpose of destroying the town. The bed of the river was once evidently at the base of the hills,—those orange hills with their blue shadows,—where rows of black holes show ancient catacombs. So strong a reflected light shone into one of these caves, that we could see something of its interior. We called it a perfect smuggler's cave, with packages of goods within,

* About 7*d*.

and a dog on guard at the entrance. When we looked at it with the glass, however, we were grave in a moment. We saw that the back and roof were sculptured.

Manfaloot is still a large place, sadly washed down, —sliced away—by the encroachment of the river. Many houses were carried away last year; and some which looked as if cut straight through their interior, have probably followed by this time.

The heat was now great in the middle of the day; and the glare oppressive to people who were on the look-out for crocodiles;—as we were after passing Manfaloot. We were glad of awning, goggles, fans, and oranges. But the crew were all alive,—kicking dust over one another on shore, leaping high in the water, to make a splash, and perpetrating all manner of practical jokes. We do not agree with travellers who declare it necessary to treat these people with coldness and severity,—to repel and beat them. We treated them as children; and this answered perfectly well. I do not remember that any one of them was ever punished on our account: certainly never by our desire. They were always manageable by kindness and mirth. They served us with heartiness, and did us no injury whatever. The only point we could not carry was inducing them to sing softly. No threats of refusing baksheesh availed. Mr. E. obtained some success on a single occasion by chucking dry bread into the throats of one or two who were quavering with shut eyes, and wide-open jaws. This joke availed for the moment, more than any threats: but the truth is, they can no more refrain from the full use of their lungs when at work than from that of eyes and ears.

On the evening of Monday the 7th, we approached Asyoot: and beautiful was the approach. After arriving in bright sunshine, apparently at its very skirts, and counting its fourteen minarets, and admiring its position at the foot of what seemed the last hill of the range, we were carried far away by a bend of the river;—saw boats, and groups of people and cattle, and noble palm and acacia woods on the opposite bank, and did not anchor till starlight under El Hamra, the village which is the port of Asyoot.

We were sorry to lose the advantage of the fair wind which had sprung up: but it was here that the crew had to bake their bread for the remainder of the voyage up. We had no reason to regret our detention, occasioning as it did our first real view of the interior of the country.—Asyoot is a post town too; and we were glad of this last certain opportunity of writing home before going quite into the wilds.

CHAPTER IV.

ASYOOT.—OLD SITES.—SOME ELEMENTS OF EGYPTIAN THOUGHT.—FIRST CROCODILES.—SOOHADJ.—GIRGEH.—KENNEH.

In the morning, our canvas was down, along the landward side of our boats; so that the people on shore could not pry. It was pleasant, however, to play the spy upon them. There were many donkeys, and gay groups of their owners, just above the boat. On the one hand, were a company of men washing clothes in the river under a picturesque old wall: and on the other, boat-builders diligently at work on the shore. The Arab artisans appear to work well. The hammers of these boat-builders were going all day; and the tinman, shoemakers, and others whom I observed in the bazaars, appeared dexterous and industrious.

Asyoot is the residence of the Governor of Upper Egypt. Selim Pasha held this office as we went up the river. While we were coming down, he was deposed;—to the great regret of all whom we heard speak of it. He was so well thought of that there was every hope of his reinstatement. Selim Pasha is he who married his sister, and made the terrible discovery while at supper on his wedding-day, in his first

interview with his bride. Both were Circassian slaves; and he had been carried away before the birth of this sister. This adventure happened when the now grey-bearded man was young: but it invests him with interest still, in addition to that inspired by his high character. We passed his garden to-day, and thought it looked well,—the palace being embosomed among palms, acacias, and the yellow-flowering mimosa; which last, when intermixed with other trees, gives a kind of autumnal tinge to masses of dark foliage.

We were much struck by the causeway, which would be considered a vast work in England. It extends from the river bank to the town, and thence on to the Djebel (mountain) with many limbs from this main trunk. In direct extent, I think it can hardly be less than two miles: but of this I am not sure. Its secondary object is to retain the Nile water after the inundation, — the water flowing in through sluices which can be easily closed. The land is divided by smaller embankments, within this large one, into compartments or basins, where the most vigorous crops of wheat, clover, and millet were flourishing when we rode by. The water stands not more than two feet deep at high Nile in the most elevated of these basins. Inside the causeway was the canal which yielded its earth to its neighbour. In this canal many pools remained; and the seed was only just springing in the dryest parts. In some places I saw shaken piers, and sluices where the unbaked brick seemed to have melted down in the water: but the new walls and bridges appeared to be solidly constructed.—On the banks of the causeway and canal on the south side of the town

were flowering mimosas as large, we thought, as oaks of fifty years growth in England. The causeway afforded an admirable road;—high, broad and level. The effect was strange of entering from such a road into such a town.

The streets had, for the most part, blank walls, brown, and rarely perpendicular. Some sloped purposely, and some from the giving way of the mud bricks. Many were cracked from top to bottom. Jars were built in near the top of several of the houses, for the pigeons. The bazaars appeared well stocked, and the business going forward was brisk. I now began to feel the misery which every Frank woman has to endure in the provincial towns of the East,—the being stared at by all eyes. The staring was not rude or offensive; but it was enough to be very disagreeable; at least, to one who knew, as I did, that the appearance of a woman with an uncovered face is an indecency in the eyes of the inhabitants. At Cairo, Jerusalem and Damascus, one feels nothing of this, and the staring is no more than we give to a Turk in the streets of London or Liverpool: but in the provincial towns there is an air of amazement in the people, mingled in some places with true Mohammedan hatred of the Christians, which it is hard to meet with composure. The gentlemen of my party, who did not care for their share as Christians, wondered at my uneasiness, and disapproved of it: but I could not help it: and though I never gave way to it so far as to omit seeing any thing on account of it, I never got over it at all, and felt it throughout to be the greatest penalty of my Eastern travel. Yet I would not advise

any Englishwoman to alter her dress or ways. She can never, in a mere passage through an Eastern country, make herself look like an Eastern woman; and an unsupported assumption of any native custom will obtain for her no respect, but only make her appear ashamed of her own origin and ways. It is better to appear as she is, at any cost, than to attempt any degree of imposture.

While we were waiting in the street to have our letters addressed in Arabic to the care of our consul at Cairo, I was, for the first time, struck by the number of blind and one-eyed people among those who surrounded us. Several young boys were one-eyed. As every body knows, this is less owing to disease than to dread of the government.

It was strange to see, in the middle of a large town, vultures and other wild birds flying overhead. Among others, we saw an eagle, with a fish in its beak.—On our way to the caves in the Djebel, we met a funeral procession coming from the cemetery which lies between the town and the hills. The women were uttering a funeral howl worthy of Ireland.

Our donkeys took us up a very steep path, nearly to the first range of caves. When we turned to overlook the landscape, what a view was there! Mr. E., who has travelled much, said he had never seen so rich an expanse of country. I felt that I had seen something like it; but I could not, at the moment, remember where. It was certainly not in England: nor was it like the plains of Lombardy; nor yet the unfenced expanse of cultivation that one sees in Germany. At last, it struck me that the resemblance was to an

Illinois prairie. The rich green, spreading on either hand to the horizon, was prairie-like: but I never was, in Illinois, on a height which commanded one hundred miles of unbroken fertility, such as I now saw. And even in Illinois, in the finest season, there is never such an atmosphere as here gave positive brilliancy to every feature of the scenery. A perfect level of the most vivid green extended north and south, till it was lost, not in haze, but from the mere inability of the eye to take in more: and through this wound away, from end to end, the full blue river. To the east, facing us, was the varied line of the Arabian hills, of a soft lilac tint. Seventeen villages, overshadowed by dark palms, were set down beside the river, or some little way into the land; and the plain was dotted with Arab husbandmen and their camels, here and there, as far as the eye could reach. Below us lay the town, with its brown, flat-roofed houses, relieved by the palms of its gardens, and two or three white cupolas, and fourteen minarets, of various heights and forms. Between it and us lay the causeway, enlivened by groups of Arabs, with their asses and camels, appearing and disappearing among the thickets of acacia which bordered it. Behind all lay the brilliant Djebel—with its glowing yellow lights and soft blue shadows. The whole scene looked to my eyes as gay as the rainbow, and as soft as the dawn. As I stood before the cave, I thought nothing could be more beautiful: but one section of it looked yet lovelier when seen through the lofty dark portal of an upper cave. But there is no conveying such an impression as that.

The caves are tombs; some of them very ancient: so ancient, that Abraham might have seen them, if he had come so far up the country. One race of those *old* times remains;—the wolves. They were sacred here (Asyoot being the Lycopolis of the Greek times;) their mummies are in many pits of the Djebel; and we saw the tracks of two in the dust of the caves.—The cave called Stabl d'Antar (Stable of the Architect) is lofty and large;—about seventy-two feet by thirty-six. Its ceiling is covered with patterns which we should call Greek borders anywhere else: but this ceiling is older than Greek art. The colours were chiefly blue, light grey and white. The colours of the hieroglyphic sculptures were red and blue,—the blue predominating. Two large figures flanked the portal; one much defaced; the other nearly perfect.

I have since seen so much of the old Egyptian monuments, and they have become so familiarly interesting to me, that I look back with amusement to this hour of my first introduction to hieroglyphics and burial caves. I can scarcely believe it was only a few months ago,—so youthful and ignorant seem now the feelings of mere curiosity and wonder with which I looked upon such painting and sculpture as afterwards became an intelligible language to me. I do not mean by this that I made any attempts to learn the old Egyptian language or its signs,—beyond a few of the commonest symbols. It is a kind of learning which requires the devotion of years; and it is perhaps the only kind of learning of which a smattering can be of no use, and may probably be mischievous.—I remember being extremely surprised at the amount of

sculptured inscriptions here,—little imagining what a mere sprinkling they were compared with what I should see in other places.

In the succession of chambers within, and in the caves above, we found ranges of holes for the deposit of wolf mummies, and pits for the reception of coffins. The roofs of some of these caves had been supported by large square pillars, whose capitals remain attached, while the shafts are gone. This gave us a hint of the architectural adornment of which we were to see so much hereafter in the tombs of Thebes and Benee Hasan. In the corner of a tomb lay a human skull, the bone of which was remarkably thick. Many bones and rags of mummy cloth lay scattered about. On the side of the hill below, we found a leg and foot. The instep was high by compression, but very long. There was also a skull, wrapped in mummy-cloth; not fragrant enough now, for all its antique spicery, to bring away.

In the pits of these caves were the mummies lying when Cambyses was busy at Thebes, overthrowing the Colossus in the plain. And long after, came the upstart Greeks, relating here their personal adventures in India under their great Alexander, and calling the place Lycopolis, and putting a wolf on the reverse of their local coins. And, long after, came the Romans, and called Lycopolis the ancient name of the place, and laid the ashes of their dead in some of the caves. And long after, came the Christian anchorites, and lived a hermit life in these rock abodes. Among them was John of Lycopolis, who was consulted as an oracle by the Emperor Theodosius, as by many others, from his

supposed knowledge of futurity. A favourite eunuch, Eutropius, was sent hither from Constantinople, to learn from the hermit what would be the event of the civil war. I once considered the times of the Emperor Theodosius old times. How modern do they appear on the hill-side at Asyoot!

Our Scotch friends came up in the evening. As they were detained for the same reason as ourselves, we left them behind when we started the next afternoon. They gave us bows and waving of handkerchiefs, when the shouts of our crew gave notice of our departure; and they no doubt hoped to see us again speedily.

The next day, I told Mr. E. that a certain area we were coming to on the east bank must be the site of some old town. I judged this from the advantages evident at a glance. The space was nearly semicircular, —its chord being the river-bank, and the rest curiously surrounded by three ranges of hills, whose extremities overlapped each other. There was thus obtained a river frontage, shelter from the sands of the desert behind, and a free ventilation through the passages of the hills. We referred to our books and map, and found that here stood Antæopolis. From this time, it was one of my amusements to determine, by observation of the site, where to look for ancient towns; and the requisites were so clear that I seldom found myself deceived.

Diodorus Siculus tells us that Antæ (supposed by Wilkinson to be probably the same with Ombte) had charge of the Ethiopian and Lybian parts of the kingdom of Osiris, while Osiris went abroad through the earth to benefit it with his gifts. Antæ seems not to

have been always in friendship with the house of Osiris, and was killed here by Hercules,* on behalf of Osiris: but he was worshipped here, near the spot where the wife and son of Osiris avenged his death on his murderer Typho. The temple sacred to Antæ, (or in the Greek, Antæus,) parts of which were standing thirty years ago, was a rather modern affair, having been built about the time of the destruction of the Colossus of Rhodes. Ptolemy Philopater built it; and he was the Egyptian monarch who sent presents and sympathy to Rhodes, on occasion of the fall of the Colossus. Now nothing remains of the monuments but some heaps of stones:—nothing whatever that can be seen from the river. The traveller can only look upon hamlets of modern Arabs, and speculate on the probability of vast "treasures hid in the sand."

If I were to have the choice of a fairy gift, it should be like none of the many things I fixed upon in my childhood, in readiness for such an occasion. It should be for a great winnowing fan, such as would, without injury to human eyes and lungs, blow away the sand which buries the monuments of Egypt. What a scene would be laid open then! One statue and sarcophagus, brought from Memphis, was buried one hundred and thirty feet below the mound surface. Who knows but that the greater part of old Memphis, and of other glorious cities, lies almost unharmed under the sand! Who can say what armies of sphinxes, what sentinels of colossi, might start up on the banks of the river, or come forth from the hill sides of the interior,

* Quite a different personage from the Greek Hercules.

when the cloud of sand had been wafted away! The ruins which we now go to study might then appear occupying only eminences, while below might be ranges of pylons, miles of colonnade, temples intact, and gods and goddesses safe in their sanctuaries. What quays along the Nile, and the banks of forgotten canals! What terraces, and flights of wide shallow steps! What architectural stages might we not find for a thousand miles along the river, where now the orange sands lie so smooth and light as to show the track,—the clear foot print—of every beetle that comes out to bask in the sun!—But it is better as it is.. If we could once blow away the sand, to discover the temples and palaces, we should next want to rend the rocks, to lay open the tombs: and heaven knows what this would set us wishing further. It is best as it is; for the time has not come for the full discovery of the treasures of Egypt. It is best as it is. The sand is a fine means of preservation; and the present inhabitants perpetuate enough of the names to serve for guidance when the day for exploration shall come. The minds of scholars are preparing for an intelligent interpretation of what a future age may find: and science, chemical and mechanical, will probably supply such means hereafter as we have not now, for treating and removing the sand when its conservative office has lasted long enough. We are not worthy yet of this great unveiling: and the inhabitants are not, from their ignorance, trustworthy as spectators. It is better that the world should wait, if only care be taken that the memory of no site now known be lost. True as I feel it to be that we had better wait, I was for ever catching myself in a

speculation, not only on the buried treasures of the mounds on shore, but on means for managing this obstinate sand.

And yet, vexatious as is its presence in many a daily scene, this sand has a bright side to its character,—like everything else. Besides its great office of preserving unharmed for a future age the records of the oldest times known to man, the sand of the desert has, for many thousand years, shared equally with the Nile the function of determining the character and the destiny of a whole people, who have again operated powerfully on the characters and destiny of other nations. Everywhere, the minds and fortunes of human races are mainly determined by the characteristics of the soil on which they are born and reared. In our own small island, there are, as it were, three tribes of people, whose lives are much determined still, in spite of all modern facilities for intercourse, by the circumstance of their being born and reared on the mineral strip to the west,—the pastoral strip in the middle,—or the eastern agricultural portion. The Welsh and Cornwall miners are as widely different from the Lincolnshire or Kentish husbandmen, and the Leicestershire herdsmen as Englishmen can be from Englishmen. Not only their physical training is different; their intellectual faculties are differently exercised, and their moral ideas and habits vary accordingly. So it is in every country where there is a diversity of geological formation: and nowhere is the original constitution of their earth so strikingly influential on the character of its inhabitants as in Egypt. There everything depends—life itself, and all that it includes—on the state of the uninter-

mitting conflict between the Nile and the Desert. The world has seen many struggles; but no other so pertinacious, so perdurable, and so sublime as the conflict of these two great powers. The Nile, ever young because perpetually renewing its youth, appears to the inexperienced eye to have no chance, with its stripling force, against the great old Goliath, the Desert, whose might has never relaxed, from the earliest days till now; but the giant has not conquered yet. Now and then he has prevailed for a season; and the tremblers whose destiny hung on the event have cried out that all was over: but he has once more been driven back, and Nilus has risen up again, to do what we see him doing in the sculptures,—bind up his water-plants about the throne of Egypt. These fluctuations of superiority have produced extraordinary effects on the people for the time: but these are not the forming and training influences which I am thinking of now. It is true that when Nile gains too great an accession of strength, and runs in destructively upon the Desert, men are in despair at seeing their villages swept away, and that torrents come spouting out from the sacred tombs in the mountain, as the fearful clouds of the sky come down to aid the river of the valley. It is true that in the opposite case, they tremble when the heavens are alive with meteors, and the Nile is too weak to rise and meet the sand columns that come marching on, followed by blinding clouds of the enemy: and that famine is then inevitable, bringing with it the moral curses which attend upon hunger. It is true that at such times strangers have seen (as we know from Abdallatif, himself an eye-witness) how little children are made food

of,* and even men slaughtered for meat, like cattle. It is true that such have been the violent effects produced on men's conduct by extremity here;—effects much like what are produced by extremity everywhere. It is not of this that I am thinking when regarding the influence on a nation of the incessant struggle between the Nile and the Desert. It is of the formation of their ideas and habits, and the training of their desires.

From the beginning, the people of Egypt have had every thing to hope from the river; nothing from the desert: much to fear from the desert; and little from the river. What their Fear may reasonably be, any one may know who looks upon a hillocky expanse of sand, where the little jerboa burrows, and the hyæna prowls at night. Under these hillocks lie temples and palaces, and under the level sands, a whole city. The enemy has come in from behind, and stifled and buried it. What is the Hope of the people from the river, any one may witness who, at the regular season, sees the people grouped on the eminences, watching the advancing waters, and listening for the voice of the crier, or the boom of the cannon which is to tell the prospect or event of the inundation of the year. Who can estimate the effect on a nation's mind and character of a perpetual vigilance against the desert; (see what it is in Holland of a similar vigilance against the sea!) and of an annual mood of Hope in regard to the Nile? Who cannot see what a stimulating and enlivening influence this periodical anxiety and relief must exercise on the character of a nation?—And then, there is the effect on

* Abdallatif. Relation de l'Égypte. Livre II. ch. 2.

their Ideas. The Nile was naturally deified by the old inhabitants. It was a god to the mass; and at least one of the manifestations of deity to the priestly class. As it was the immediate cause of all they had, and all they hoped for,—the creative power regularly at work before their eyes, usually conquering, though occasionally checked, it was to them the Good Power; and the Desert was the Evil one. Hence came a main part of their faith, embodied in the allegory of the burial of Osiris in the sacred stream, whence he rose, once a year, to scatter blessings over the earth.—Then, the structure of their country originated or modified their ideas of death and life. As to the disposal of their dead;—they could not dream of consigning their dead to the waters, which were too sacred to receive any meaner body than the incorruptible one of Osiris: nor must any other be placed within reach of its waters, or in the way of the pure production of the valley. There were the boundary rocks, with the hints afforded by their caves. These became sacred to the dead. After the accumulation of a few generations of corpses, it became clear how much more extensive was the world of the dead than that of the living: and as the proportion of the living to the dead became, before men's eyes, smaller and smaller, the state of the dead became a subject of proportionate importance to them, till their faith and practice grew into what we see them in the records of the temples and tombs,—engrossed with the idea of death and in preparation for it. The unseen world became all in all to them; and the visible world and present life of little more importance than as the necessary introduction to the higher and greater. The

imagery before their eyes perpetually sustained these modes of thought. Everywhere they had in presence the symbols of the worlds of death and life;—the limited scene of production, activity and change;—the valley with its verdure, its floods, and its busy multitudes, who were all incessantly passing away, to be succeeded by their like; while, as a boundary to this scene of life, lay the region of death, to their view unlimited, and everlastingly silent to the human ear.—Their imagery of death was wholly suggested by the scenery of their abode. Our reception of this is much injured by our having been familiarised with it first through the ignorant and vulgarised Greek adoption of it, in their imagery of Charon, Styx, Cerberus and Rhadamanthus: but if we can forget these, and look upon the older records with fresh eyes, it is inexpressibly interesting to contemplate the symbolical representations of death by the oldest of the Egyptians, before Greek or Persian was heard of in the world; the passage of the dead across the river or lake of the valley, attended by the Conductor of souls, the god Anubis; the formidable dog, the guardian of the mansion of Osiris, (or the divine abode;) the balance in which the heart or deeds of the deceased are weighed against the symbol of Integrity; the infant Harpocrates, —the emblem of a new life, seated before the throne of the judge; the range of assessors who are to pronounce on the life of the being come up to judgment; and finally the judge himself, whose suspended sceptre is to give the sign of acceptance or condemnation. Here the deceased has crossed the living valley and river; and in the caves of the death region, where the howl of the wild dog is heard by night, is this process of judgment

going forward; and none but those who have seen the contrasts of the region with their own eyes,—none who have received the idea through the borrowed imagery of the Greeks, or the traditions of any other people,—can have any adequate notion how the mortuary ideas of the primitive Egyptians, and, through them, of the civilised world at large, have been originated by the everlasting conflict of the Nile and the Desert.

How the presence of these elements has, in all ages, determined the occupations and habits of the inhabitants, needs only to be pointed out; the fishing, the navigation, and the almost amphibious habits of the people are what they owe to the Nile; and their practice of laborious tillage, to the Desert. A more striking instance of patient industry can nowhere be found than in the method of irrigation practised in all times in this valley. After the subsidence of the Nile, every drop of water needed for tillage, and for all other purposes, for the rest of the year, is hauled up and distributed by human labour,—up to the point where the sakia, worked by oxen, supersedes the shadoof, worked by men. Truly the Desert is here a hard task-master: or rather, a pertinacious enemy, to be incessantly guarded against: but yet a friendly adversary, inasmuch as such natural compulsion to toil is favourable to a nation's character.

One other obligation which the Egyptians owe to the Desert struck me freshly and forcibly, from the beginning of our voyage to the end. It plainly originated their ideas of Art. Not those of the present inhabitants, which are wholly Saracenic still: but those of the primitive race who appear to have originated art all

over the world. The first thing that impressed me in the Nile scenery, above Cairo, was the angularity of almost all forms. The trees appeared almost the only exception. The line of the Arabian hills soon became so even as to give them the appearance of being supports of a vast table-land, while the sand heaped up at their bases was like a row of pyramids. Elsewhere, one's idea of sand-hills is that, of all round eminences, they are the roundest: but here their form is generally that of truncated pyramids. The entrances of the caverns are square. The masses of sand left by the Nile are square. The river banks are graduated by the action of the water, so that one may see a hundred natural Nilometers in as many miles. Then, again, the forms of the rocks, especially the limestone ranges, are remarkably grotesque. In a few days, I saw, without looking for them, so many colossal figures of men and animals springing from the natural rock, so many sphinxes and strange birds, that I was quite prepared for anything I afterwards met with in the temples. The higher we went up the country, the more pyramidal became the forms of even the mud houses of the modern people: and in Nubia, they were worthy, from their angularity, of old Egypt. It is possible that the people of Abyssinia might, in some obscure age, have derived their ideas of Art from Hindostan, and propagated them down the Nile. No one can now positively contradict it. But I did not feel on the spot that any derived art was likely to be in such perfect harmony with its surroundings as that of Egypt certainly is;—a harmony so wonderful as to be perhaps the most striking circumstance of all to an European, coming from a country

where all Art is derived,* and its main beauty therefore lost. It is useless to speak of the beauty of Egyptian architecture and sculpture to those who, not going to Egypt, can form no conception of its main condition; —its appropriateness. I need not add that I think it worse than useless to adopt Egyptian forms and decoration in countries where there is no Nile and no Desert, and where decorations are not, as in Egypt, fraught with meaning,—pictured language,—messages to the gazer. But I must speak more of this hereafter. Suffice it now that in the hills, angular at their summits, with angular mounds at their bases, and angular caves in their strata, we could not but at once see the originals of temples, pyramids and tombs. Indeed, the pyramids look like an eternal fixing down of the shifting sand-hills which are here a main feature of the desert. If we consider further what facility the desert has afforded for scientific observation,—how it was the field for the meteorological studies of the Egyptians, and how its permanent pyramidal forms served them, whether originally or by derivation, with instruments of measurement and calculation for astronomical purposes, we shall see that, one way or another, the Desert has been a great benefactor to the Egyptians of all time, however fairly regarded, in some senses, as an enemy. The sand may, as I said before, have a fair side to its character, if it

* Even the Gothic spire is believed by those who know best to be an attenuated obelisk; as the obelisk is an attenuated pyramid. Our Gothic aisles are sometimes conjectured to be a symmetrical stone copy of the glades of a forest: but there are pillared aisles at El Karnac and Medeenet Haboo, which were constructed in a country which had no woods, and before the forests of northern Europe are discernible in the dim picture of ancient history.

has taken a leading part in determining the ideas, the feelings, the worship, the occupation, the habits, and the arts of the people of the Nile valley, for many thousand years.

The hills now, above Antæopolis, approached the river in strips, which, on arriving at them, we found to be united by a range at the back. Some fine sites for cities were thus afforded; and many of them were, no doubt, thus occupied in past ages.—A little further on rises a lofty rock,—a precipice three hundred feet high, which our Rais was afraid to pass at night. I was on deck before sunrise on the morning of the 11th, to see it: but I found there was no hurry. A man was sent for milk from this place; so I landed too, and walked some way along the bank. On the Lybian side, I overlooked a rich, green, clumpy country. On the Arabian side, the hills came down so close to the water as to leave only a narrow path, scarcely passable for camels at high Nile. There were goats among the rocks; and on the other shore, sheep, whose brown wool is spun by distaff, by men in the fields, or travelling along the bank. The unbleached wool makes the brown garments which all the men wear. I often wished that some one would set the fashion of red garments in the brown Nile scenery. We saw more or less good blue every day; but the only red dress I had seen yet was at Asyoot, where it looked so well that one wished for more. The red tarboosh is a treat to the eye, when the sun touches it,—or at night, the lamp on deck: but the crew did not wear the tarboosh, —only little white cotton caps, in the absence of the full-dress turban.

This day was remarkable for our seeing the first doum palm (an angular tree!) and the first crocodile. Alee said he had seen a crocodile two days before: but we had not. And now we saw several. The first was not distinguishable, to inexperienced eyes, from the inequalities of the sand. The next I dimly saw slip off into the water. In the afternoon, a family of crocodiles were seen basking on a mud bank which we were to pass. As we drew near, in silence, the whole boat's company being collected at the bows, the largest crocodile slipped into the water, showing its nose at intervals. Another followed, leaving behind the little one, a yellow monster, asleep, with the sunlight full upon it. Mr. E. fired at it, and at the same moment the crew set up a shout. Of course, it awoke, and was off in an instant, but unhurt. We had no ball; and crocodile shooting is hopeless, with nothing better than shot. Our crew seemed to have no fear of these creatures, plunging and wading in the river without hesitation, whenever occasion required. There being no wind, we moored at sunset; and two of us obtained half-an-hour's walk before dark. Even then, the jackals were howling after us the whole time. Our walk was over mud of various degrees of dryness, and among young wheat and little tamarisks, springing from the cracked soil.

On the 13th we fell in with Selim Pasha, without being aware what we were going to see. Our crew having to track, the Rais and Alee went ashore for charcoal, and Mr. E. and I for a walk. Following a path which wound through coarse grass and thorny mimosas, we found ourselves presently approaching

the town of Soohadj: and near the arched gate of the town, and everywhere under the palms, were groups and crowds of people, in clean turbans and best clothes. Then appeared, from behind the trees on the margin, three boats at anchor, one being that of Selim Pasha himself; the others for his suite. He had come up the river to receive his dues, and was about to settle accounts now at Soohadj. He had a crew of twenty-three men, and was proceeding day and night. His interpreter accosted us, offered us service, discussed the wind and weather, and invited us to take coffee on board the Governor's boat. I was sorry to be in the way of Mr. E.'s going; but I could not think of such an adventure, in Mrs. Y.'s absence. We saw the Governor leave his boat, supported by the arms, for dignity's sake. He then took his seat under a palm, and received some papers offered him. He looked old, short, and very business-like. A scribe sat on the top of his cabin, with inkhorn and other apparatus; and a man was hurrying about on shore, with a handful of papers covered with Arabic writing. All this, with the turbaned and gazing groups under the tamarisks, the white-robed soldiers before the gate of the barracks; the stretch of town-walls beside us, and the minarets of Eckmim rising out of the palm-groves on the opposite shore, made up a new and striking scene. Mr. and Mrs. Y. saw, from the boat, part of the reverse side: they saw eight men in irons, reserved to be bastinadoed for the non-payment of their taxes.—As we walked on, we passed a school, where the scholars were moving their bodies to and fro, and jabbering as usual. Then we descended the embankment of the canal which

winds in towards the town, and crossed its sluice: and then we came out upon a scene of millet-threshing. Two oxen, muzzled, were treading out the grain: five men were beating the ears, and a sixth was turning over and shaking the husks with a rake. Such are the groups which incessantly delight the eye in Eastern travel.—Next, we found ourselves among a vast quantity of heavy stones, squared for building. They were deeply embedded, but did not look like the remains of ancient building. And now it was time for us to stop, lest there should be difficulty, if we went further, in getting on board. So we sat down in a dusty but shady place, among some fowl-houses, and beside an oven. I never took a more amusingly foreign walk.—A short ramble that evening was as little like home; but more sad than amusing. We entered a beautiful garden, or cultivated palm orchard, which was in course of rapid destruction by the Nile. Whole plots of soil, and a great piece of wall were washed away. Repeatedly we saw signs of this destruction; and we wondered whether an equivalent advantage was given any where else. By day we passed towns which, like Manfaloot, were cut away, year by year; and by night the sullen plash caused by the fall of masses of earth, was heard. In countries where security of property is more thought of than it is here, this liability must seriously affect the value of the best portions of the land; those which have a river frontage. Here it appears to be quietly submitted to, as one of the decrees of inevitable fate. The circumstance of the Nile changing its course must also affect some historical and geographical questions:—in the one case as

regards the marches of ancient armies, and the sites of old cities; and in the other, the relations of different parts of the country. Many towns, called inland by geographers, are now on the banks of the river. At Manfaloot, it is clear that the divergence from the old course under the rocks is very great: and near Benee Hasan the change is made almost from year to year. When Sir G. Wilkinson visited the caves,* the river was so far off as to leave a breadth of two miles between it and the rocks: and Mrs. Romer, who was there the year before us, describes the passage to the caves as something laborious and terrific: whereas, when we visited the caves on our return, we found the river flowing at the base of the acclivity; and we reached the tombs easily in twelve minutes. From the heights, we traced its present and former course, and could plainly see a third bed, in which it had at one time run. We were sorry to see it cut through fine land, where the crops on either bank showed what the destruction must have been. The banks were falling in during the few hours of our stay; and here, as in similar places, we observed that the river was more turbid than usual. These local accidents must largely affect the great question of the rate of rising of the bed of the river, and, in consequence, that of the whole valley; a question which some have attempted to determine by a comparison of the dates of the buildings at Thebes with the depth of the sand accumulated above their bases.

The next place where we went ashore, Girgeh, once

* Wilkinson's Modern Egypt and Thebes. II. 45.

stood a quarter of a mile inland: it is now in course of being washed down. It is a miserable place, as might be expected, with such a fate hanging over it. We staid here an hour, for the purchase of bread, fowls, and a sheep. We give 30 paras ($1\frac{3}{4}d.$) for a fowl; 6*s.* for a sheep; and a piastre ($2\frac{1}{4}d.$) for 42 eggs. The small bazaars had few people in them at this hour, (7 A.M.), and of those few many were blind; and on our return to the boat, we found a row of blind people on the bank, hoping for baksheesh.—The millet stalks here measured eleven feet; and of course, the fields are a perfect jungle. We saw occasionally the millet stalks burnt, and strewn over the fields for a top-dressing. At other times we observed that where the millet had been cut, wheat was sown broadcast among the stubble, which was left to rot. The only manuring that we saw, besides this top-dressing, was that of the gardens with pigeons' dung; and the qualifying of the Nile mud with sand from the desert, or dust out of the temples, brought in frail-baskets on the backs of asses.

Two of our sapient crew having quarrelled at mess about which should have a particular morsel of bread, and fought noisily on shore, the Rais administered the bastinado. The first was laid down, and held by the feet and shoulders, while flogged with a boat-pole. He cried out vigorously. The other came forward cheerfully from the file, and laid himself down. The Rais broke the pole over him: but he made no noise, jumped up, spat the dust out of his mouth, and went to work at the tow-rope, as if nothing had happened. They seem to bear no malice, and joke with one another immediately after the bitterest quarrels.—One

of our Nubians wears his knife in a sheath, strapped about the upper part of his left arm. Another wears an amulet in the same manner. Two who come from Dongola have their faces curiously gashed with three cuts on each cheek, and four on each side the eye. These cuts are given them by their parents in childhood, for beauty-marks.

We now began to meet rafts of pottery coming down from Kenneh, the seat of the manufacture of the water jars which are in general use. Porous earth and burnt grass are the chief materials used. We meet seven or more rafts in a group. First, a layer of palm fronds is put on the raft; and then a layer of jars; then another layer of each. The jars all have their mouths out of the water. They are so porous that their conductors are continually employed in emptying them of water: that is, they are always so employed when we meet them. Not being worth sponges, they dip in and wring out cloths, with strings to them. The oars are mere branches, whose boughs are tied together at the extremity. Though they bend too much, they answer their purpose pretty well: but the whole affair looks rude and precarious enough.—In curious contrast with their progress was that of the steamer, conveying the Prince of Prussia, which we met to-day, hurrying down from Thebes. We preferred our method of voyaging, though we now advanced only about twelve miles a day, and had been fourteen days making the same distance that we did the first two.

We cannot understand why the country boats are so badly laden as they appear to be. The cargo is placed so forward as to sink the bows to the water; and so

many founder in consequence that we cannot conceive why the practice is not altered. We have seen several sunk. One was a merchant boat that had gone down in the night, with five people in her. She was a sad spectacle,—her masts and rigging appearing above water, in the middle of the stream.

On the morning of the 19th, on leaving our anchorage near the high rock of Chenoboscion, we found that a wind had sprung up; and we enjoyed the sensation of more rapid progress. We might now hope to see the temple of Dendara in a few hours. The Arabian mountains retreated, and the Lybian chain advanced. Crocodiles plunged into the water as we sailed past the mud banks. The doum palms began to congregate, and from clumps they became woods. Behind one of these dark woods, I saw a mass of building which immediately fixed my attention; and when a turn of the river brought us to a point where the sunlight was shining into it, I could clearly distinguish the characteristics of the temple of Dendara. I could see the massive portico;—the dark spaces between the pillars, and the line of the architrave. Thus much we could see for two hours from the opposite shore, as Mr. E. had to ride up to Kenneh for letters: but, as the wind was fair, and the temple was two miles off, we left till our return any closer examination of it.

While Mr. E. and Alee were gone to the town, Mr. Y. walked along the shore, in the direction of Selim Pasha's boats; and Mrs. Y. and I were busy about domestic business on board. I was sewing on deck when Mr. Y. returned, and told me he had been invited to an audience of Selim Pasha. When pipes and

coffee had been brought, conversation began, through the medium of some Italian gentlemen of the Pasha's suite. On Mr. Y.'s expressing his hope that, by means of commerce, a friendly feeling between the Egyptians and English would always subsist and increase, one of these officers exclaimed, "How should that be, when you have robbed us of Syria?" On Mr. Y.'s pacific observations being again received with an angry recurrence to this sore subject, the Pasha interposed, saying, "These are great and important affairs which are for our superiors to settle, and with which we subordinates have nothing to do. Let us talk of something pleasant." While Mr. Y. was telling me this, an elderly man, with a white beard, hideous teeth, and coarse face altogether, was approaching the boat: and to my dismay, he stepped on board,—or rather, was pushed in by his attendants. Mr. Y. had been sitting with his back to the shore; and now, taken by surprise, seeing the white beard, and having his head full of his late interview, he announced to me "his Excellency, Selim Pasha." Up I jumped, with my lap-full of work, even more disappointed that this should be the hero of that romantic story than dismayed at the visit. And he looked so unlike the old man I saw under the palm at Souhadj! I called up Mrs. Y. from the cabin. Mr. Y. made signs to the cook (for our only interpreter was absent) for pipes and coffee: and we sat down in form and order, and abundant awkwardness. To complete the absurdity of the scene, a line of towels, just out of the wash-tub, were drying on the top of the cabin; and the ironing blanket was on the cabin table.—The first relief was Mrs. Y.'s telling me, "It is not Selim Pasha.

These are the son and grandson of the English consul at Kenneh."

Then I began to remember certain things of the English consul at Kenneh;—what a discreet old Arab he is reported to be,—behaving tenderly to European ladies, and pressing parties to go and dine with him; and then, when they are on the way to the town, stepping back to the boat, and laying hands on all the nice provisions he can find, from eggs to Maraschino: so that he extracts a delectable dinner for himself out of his showy hospitality to strangers. While I was reviving all this in my memory, the old man himself was coming down to us. He shook hands with us all round; and, as I expected, kissed the hand of each lady, and pressed us to go up and dine with him. Alee, who had in the meantime returned with Mr. E., and seen from afar that we were holding a levée, had received his instructions to decline decisively all invitations, and convey that we were in a hurry, as the wind was fair for Thebes: so we were let off with a promise that we would dine with the Consul on our return, if we could.—But now arrived the Governor of Kenneh, a far superior-looking person, handsomely dressed in fine brown broadcloth. The Consul's elderly son took the opportunity of exploring the cabins, peeping into every corner, and examining Mr. E.'s glass and fowling-piece. We feared a long detention by visitors; but these departed before any others came; and it was still early in the afternoon when we spread our sail, and were off for Thebes.

CHAPTER V.

WALKS ASHORE.—FIRST SIGHT OF THEBES.—ADFOO.—CHRISTMAS DAY.

THE next morning, (Sunday, December 20th) we found we must still have patience, as we should not see Thebes for another day. The wind had dropped at seven, the evening before, and had brought us only three miles this morning. In the course of the day we were made fully sensible of our happiness in having plenty of time, and in not being pressed to speed by any discomfort on board our boat. We were walking on shore at noon, among men and children busy about their tillage, and sheep and asses and shadoofs, when we saw two boats, bearing the British and American flags, floating down the stream. They wore round, and landed their respective parties, who were Cairo acquaintances of ours. Neither party had been beyond Thebes. How we pitied them when we thought of Philœ and the Cataracts, and the depths of Nubia, which we were on our way to see! The English gentlemen were pressed for time, and were paying their crew to work night and day; by which they did not appear to be gaining much. The American gentleman and his wife were suffering cruelly under the misery of vermin in their boat: a trouble which all travellers in Egypt must

endure in a greater or less degree, but which we found much less terrible than we had expected, and reducible to something very trifling by a little housewifely care and management.* The terms in which they spoke of Thebes, after even their hasty journey, warmed our hearts and raised our spirits high.

The next day was the shortest day. It was curious to observe how we had lately gained five minutes of sunlight by our progress southwards. Though we cared to-day for nothing but Thebes, we condescended to examine, in our early walk, a strange, dreary-looking place which we were informed was one of the Pasha's schools. It was a large square mud building, crumbling away in desolation. No children were there; but two officers stared at us out of a window. Another, armed to the teeth, entered the enclosure, and spoke to us, we suppose in Arabic, as he passed. The plots of ground were neglected, and the sheds losing their roofs. It is evident that all is over with this establishment, while the people of the district appear in good condition. There were shadoofs at small distances, and so many husbandmen at hand that they relieve each other every two hours at this laborious work, a crier making known along the bank the expiration of the time.—We walked through flourishing fields of tobacco and millet: and we gathered, for the first time, the beautiful yellow blossom of the cotton shrub. The castor-oil plant began here to be almost as beautiful as the cotton.

Whenever we went for a walk, we were most energetically warned against the dogs of the peasantry: and

* Appendix B.

one of the crew always sprang ashore with a club for our defence when we were seen running into the great danger of going where we might meet a dog. I suppose the danger is real,—so invariably did the peasants rush towards us, on the barking of a dog, to pelt the animal away. I never saw any harm done by a dog, however; and I never could remember to be on my guard; so that one or another of the crew had often to run after me at full speed, when I had forgotten the need of a club bearer, and gone alone.

From breakfast time this day, we were looking over southwestwards, to the Lybian hills which we knew contained the Tombs of the Kings: and before noon, we had seen what we can never forget. On our return we spent eight days at Thebes; eight days of industrious search, which make us feel familiar with the whole circuit of monuments. But the first impression remains unimpaired and undisturbed. I rather shrink from speaking of it; it is so absolutely incommunicable! The very air and sunshine of the moment, the time of day, the previous mood of mind, have so much share in such a first impression as this, that it can never come alike to any two people. I can but relate what the objects were; and that most meagrely.

The wind was now carrying us on swiftly; and as we, of course, stood as high as we could, on the roof of the cabin, the scene unfolded before us most favourably. Every ridge of hills appeared to turn, and every recess to open, to show us all sides of what we passed. To our left spread a wide level country,—the eastern expanse of the plain of Thebes,—backed by peaked mountains, quite unlike the massive Arabian rocks

which had hitherto formed that boundary. There was a thick wood on that bank; and behind that wood Alee pointed out to us the heavy masses of the ruins of El Karnac. Vast and massy indeed they looked. But, as yet, the chief interest was on the western shore. The natural features were remarkable enough, — the vastness of the expanse, especially, which confounded all anticipation. The modern world obtruded itself before the ancient,—the shores dressed in the liveliest green, and busy with Arabs, camels and buffalo, partially intercepting the view behind. Between these vivid shores, and before and behind the verdant promontories, lay reach after reach of the soft grey, brimming river. Behind this brilliant foreground stretched immeasurable slopes of land, interrupted here and there by ranges of mounds or ridges of tawny rocks, and dotted over with fragments of ruins, and teeming with indications of more. In the rear was the noble guard of mountains which overlooks and protects the plain of Thebes: mountains now nearly colourless,—tawny as the expanse below; but their valleys and hollows revealed by the short, sharp shadows of noon. The old name for this scene was running in my head,—"the Lybian suburb:" and when I looked for the edifices of this suburb, what did I not see? I could see, even with the naked eye, and perfectly with the glass, traces of the mighty works which once made this, for greatness, the capital of the world. Long rows of square apertures indicated the ranges of burying places. Straggling remains of building wandered down the declivities of sand. And then the Rameséum was revealed, and I could distinguish its colossal statues.

And next appeared,—and my heart stood still at the sight,—the Pair. There they sat, together yet apart, in the midst of the plain, serene and vigilant,—still keeping their untired watch over the lapse of ages and the eclipse of Egypt. I can never believe that any thing else so majestic as this Pair has been conceived of by the imagination of Art. Nothing even in nature certainly ever affected me so unspeakably;—no thunder storm in my childhood, nor any aspect of Niagara, or the great Lakes of America, or the Alps, or the Desert, in my later years. I saw them afterwards, daily, and many times a day, during our stay at Thebes: and the wonder and awe grew from visit to visit. Yet no impression exceeded the first; and none was like it. Happy the traveller who sees them first from afar; that is, who does not arrive at Thebes by night!

We had not thought of stopping at Thebes on our way up the river: but we were delighted to find that the Rais wanted to have his head shaved, and Alee to buy a sheep and some bread. We drew to the El-Uksur (Luxor) shore, and ran up to the ruins. The most conspicuous portion from the river is the fourteen pillars which stand parallel with it, in a double row: but we went first to the great entrance to the temple. I find here in my journal the remark which occurs oftener than any other; that no preconception can be formed of these places. I know that it is useless to repeat it here: for I meet everywhere at home people who think, as I did before I went, that between books, plates, and the stiff and peculiar character of Egyptian architecture and sculpture, Egyptian art may be almost as well known and conceived of in England as on the

spot. I can only testify, without hope of being believed, that it is not so; that instead of ugliness, I found beauty; instead of the grotesque, I found the solemn: and where I looked for rudeness, from the primitive character of Art, I found the sense of the soul more effectually reached than by works which are the result of centuries of experience and experiment. The mystery of this fact sets one thinking, laboriously; I may say, painfully. Egypt is not the country to go to for the recreation of travel. It is too suggestive and too confounding to be met but in the spirit of study. One's powers of observation sink under the perpetual exercise of thought: and the lightest-hearted voyager, who sets forth from Cairo eager for new scenes and days of frolic, comes back an antique, a citizen of the world of six thousand years ago, kindred with the mummy. Nothing but large knowledge and sound habits of thought can save him from returning perplexed and borne down;—unless indeed it be ignorance and levity. A man who goes to shoot crocodiles and flog Arabs, and eat ostrich's eggs, looks upon the monuments as so many strange old stone-heaps, and comes back "bored to death with the Nile;" as we were told we should be. He turns back from Thebes, or from the First Cataract;—perhaps without having even seen the Cataract, when within a mile of it, as in a case I know; and he pays his crew to work night and day, to get back to Cairo as fast as possible. He may return gay and unworn: and so may the true philosopher, to whom no tidings of Man in any age come amiss; who has no prejudices to be painfully weaned from, and an imagination too strong to be

overwhelmed by mystery, and the rush of a host of new ideas. But for all between these two extremes of levity and wisdom, a Nile voyage is as serious a labour as the mind and spirits can be involved in; a trial even to health and temper such as is little dreamed of on leaving home. The labour and care are well bestowed, however, for the thoughtful traveller can hardly fail of returning from Egypt a wiser, and therefore a better man.

There is something very interesting in meeting with a fellow-feeling in ancient travellers so strong as may be found in the following passage from Abdallatif with that of some modern Egyptian voyagers. The passage is almost the same as some entries in my journal, made when I had never heard of the Bagdad physician. He speaks of Memphis, as seen in his day, and as, alas! one fears it will be seen no more. "Notwithstanding the immense extent of this city, and its high antiquity: notwithstanding all the vicissitudes of the different governments under which it has passed: notwithstanding the efforts that various nations have made to destroy it in obliterating the minutest traces, effacing its smallest remains, carrying off the materials, even to the very stones, of which it was constructed; laying waste its edifices, mutilating the figures which adorned them; and notwithstanding all that four thousand years and more have been able to add to such causes of destruction, these ruins yet offer to the eye of the spectator such a combination of wonders as confounds his understanding, and as the most eloquent man would vainly attempt to describe. The longer he contemplates, the more admiration he feels: and each

returning glance at these ruins causes new extacy. Scarcely has the spectacle suggested one idea to the mind of the spectator, when it overpowers it by a greater; and when he thinks he has obtained a perfect knowledge of what is before him, he presently learns that his conceptions are still far below the truth."* A yet older traveller, Herodotus, says the same thing more briefly: "I shall enlarge upon what concerns Egypt, because it contains more wonders than any other country; and because there is no other country where we may see so many works which are admirable, and beyond all expression."†

It is not the vastness of the buildings which strikes one first at El-Uksur,—vast as they are; it is the marvel of the sculptures with which they are covered; —so old, so spirited, and so multitudinous. It is Homer, alive before one's eyes. And what a thought it is, to one standing here, how long this very sculpture has been an image and a thought to great minds placed one far behind another in the stages of human history! Herodotus, who here seems a modern brother-traveller, stood on this spot, and remembered the Iliad as we were now remembering it. He spoke of Homer, his predecessor by four hundred years, as we speak of those who lived in the crusading times. And Homer told of wars which were the same old romance to the people of his time as the Crusades are to us. And at the time of these wars, this Thebes was a city of a thousand years; and these battle-pictures now before our eyes were antiquities, as our cathedrals are to us.

* Relation de l'Egypt. Livre I. ch. 4. † Herod. II. 35.

Here we were standing before one of the "hundred gates" through which Homer says the Theban warriors passed in and out; and on the flanks of this gateway were sculptured the achievements of the ancestors of these warriors There are the men and horses and chariots, as if in full career,—as full of life as if painted, and painted in a modern time! The stones of the edifice are parting in many places; and these battle-figures extend over the cracks, almost uninjured by the decay. These graven epics will last some time longer, though the stone records will give way before the paper.

The guardian colossi are mighty creatures, with their massive shoulders and serene heads rising out of the ground. A third helmet is visible; and among the Arab huts near, a fourth. We saw here for the first time columns with the lotus-shaped capitals; the capitals being painted, and the blossoms, buds and leaves which filled up the outline being very distinct. One test of the massive character of the work was curious. A huge block of the architrave has fallen from its place, and rests on the rim of the cup of the lotus, without breaking it. We were now introduced to some of the details of Egyptian architecture, and to some of its great separate features: but all unity of impression was obviated by the intrusion of the mud huts which are plastered up against the ruins throughout their range. When we came down the river, and had become familiar with the structure of Egyptian temples, we could make out the plan of this, and somewhat discharge from view the blemishes which spoiled every thing now. But at present, we

were not qualified, and we carried away a painful impression of confusion as well as ruin.

As we sailed away, I obtained another view of the Pair; and I watched them till I could hardly tell whether it was distance or the dusk which hid them at last.

The wind carried us on well: too well; for a stay of the foremast gave way; and this hindered our progress. The calm and pathetic-looking Rais rushed towards us, vociferated, and pulled Mr. E. by the wrist to the forepart, to see the crack,—of which Mr. E., with all his experience in such matters, thought little. The Rais, however, is responsible for the condition of the boat, and he feared that the owner would "cut his neck off" if any thing was carried away. So we moored to the bank, and some little nails were driven in, so as to do no good whatever; and then it came out that the Rais wanted to stop here for the night. We so protested against this that he appeared to yield; but at the end of a mile or so, he drove us decisively into the eastern bank.

As I was walking the deck before tea, I saw two lights moving up under the opposite bank; and supposed them to be from Selim Pasha's boats. They crossed the stream, however; and the boats they belonged to drove into the bank so immediately behind us as to lift our rigging. It was our Scotch friends, and the American party. The gentlemen immediately exchanged visits; and our own party brought us some amusement when they returned. Mr. E.'s first exclamation, as he threw down his hat, was "What a lucky

fellow that is! He has shot a crocodile." "And why not, if he carries ball?" "Ah! I should have brought ball. He has done it very cleverly, though." And when the Scotchman returned the call after tea, we found that he had indeed done a difficult and hazardous feat very well: and he was in possession of the stuffed hide as a trophy.

The next morning, we had an amusement which seemed ridiculous enough in the Thebaid, but certainly rather exciting;—a boat race. When I came on deck, the Scotch gentlemen were just mounting the bank, with their fowling pieces; and their crew and ours were preparing to track. I was about to go ashore also for a walk, when I observed that our Rais was getting out the sail, though there was not a breath of wind. It was clear that he expected to fall in with a wind at the next reach of the river: so I remained on board. Our sail caught the eye of our Scotch friends. I saw the halt of their red tarbooshes over the bushes that fringed the bank. They scampered back, and leaped on board their boat; and in another moment, up went their sail. In another, up went the American's! Three sails, no wind, and three crews tracking, at a pace scarcely less funereal than usual!—At the expected point, the sails filled, all at the same instant, and off we went. For an hour or more, I could not believe that we were gaining ground, though Mr. E. declared we were. When it was becoming clear that we were, he told that, provoking as it was, we must take in sail and yield the race, as we had to take up, in yonder bay, our milk messenger. There he was, accordingly; and quick was the manœuvre of putting

in, and snatching up the poor fellow. Half a dozen hands hauled him in, and helped to spill the milk. Then, what a shout of laughter there was when the Scotchman shortened sail, and took up his milkman too: and after him, the Americans! We could relish the milk now, which we had thought so much in our way before. The race was fairly decided before ten o'clock. We beat, as we ought, from the superiority of our boat: and before noon, our Scotch friends put into Isna (Esneh) where their crew were to bake their bread. This was the last place north of the Cataract, where they could do so.

Isna looks well from the river; but we could see nothing of the temple, which is lost to view in the town. We left it for our return: and we meant to do the same with that of Adfoo (Edfou). But it came in sight while we were at dinner the next day, just when there was no wind. We decided that no time would be lost by a run up to the temple: so we sprang ashore, among cotton and castor-oil plants, and walked a mile in dust, through fields and under rows of palms, and among Arab dwellings, to the front of the mighty edifice. No one of the temples of Egypt struck me more with the conviction that these buildings were constructed as fortifications, as much as for purposes of religious celebration. I will not here give any detailed account of this temple; partly because I understood these matters better when I afterwards saw it again: and yet more, because it was now almost buried in dust, much of which was in course of removal on our return, for manuring the land. —It was here, and now, that I was first taken by

surprise with the *beauty*;—the beauty of every thing;—the sculptured columns, with their capitals, all of the same proportion and outline, though exhibiting in the same group the lotus, the date palm, the doum palm and the tobacco:—the decorations,—each one, with its fulness of meaning,—a delicately sculptured message to all generations, through all time:—and, above all, the faces. I had fancied the faces, even the portraits, grotesque: but the type of the old Egyptian face has great beauty, though a beauty little resembling that which later ages have chosen for their type. It resembles, however, some actual modern faces. In the sweet girlish countenances of Isis and Athor, I often observed a likeness to persons,—and especially one very pretty one,—at home.

The other thing that surprised me most was the profusion of the sculptured inscriptions. I had often read of the whole of the surfaces of these temples being covered with inscriptions: but the fact was never fairly in my mind till now: and the spectacle was as amazing as if I had never heard of it. The amount of labour invested here seems to shame all other human industry. It reminds one more of the labours of the coral insect than of those of men.

After taking a look at the scanty remains of the smaller temple, we returned to the boat, to set foot on land no more, we hoped, till we reached the boundary of Egypt, at the old Syene. My friends at home had promised to drink our healths at the First Cataract on Christmas day: and, when the wind sprang up, on our leaving Adfoo, and we found, on the morning of the 24th, that it had carried us twenty-five

miles in the night, we began to believe we should really keep our appointment.

The quarries of Silsilis have a curious aspect from the river;—half way between rocks and buildings: for the stones were quarried out so regularly as to leave buttresses which resemble pillars or colossal statues. Here, where men once swarmed, working that machinery whose secret is lost, and moving those masses of stone which modern men can only gaze at,—in this once busy place, there is now only the hyæna and its prey. In the bright daylight, when the wild beast is hidden in its lair, all is as still as when we passed.

We saw this morning a man crossing the river, here very wide, on a bundle of millet stalks. His clothes were on his head, like a huge turban, and he paddled himself over with the branch of a tree.

At sunset, the contrasting colours of the limestone and sandstone ranges were striking. The limestone was of a bright pale yellow: the sandstone purplish. By moonlight, we saw the ruins of Kóm Umboo (Kom Ombos), which looked fine on the summit of their rock on the eastern bank.

Christmas morning was like a July morning in England. We had made good progress during the night, and were now only eleven miles from Aswán (Essouan), the old Syene,—the frontier between Egypt and Nubia. When we came within two miles, we left our letter-writing. The excitement was too strong to allow of any employment. At present, we saw nothing of the wildness of the scenery, of which we had read so much. We found that higher up. The river became

more and more lake-like; and there was a new feature in the jutting black rocks. The shores were green and tranquil; and palms abounded more than in any place we had passed. Behind these rich woods, however, the Lybian desert rose, yellow with sand drifts.—Our crew became merry in the near prospect of rest. One of them dressed himself very fine, swathing himself with turbans, and began to dance, to the music and clapping of the rest. He danced up to us, with insinuating cries of "baa" and "baksheesh," as a hint for a present of a sheep. In the midst of this, we ran aground, and the brisk fellows threw down their drum, pipe, and finery, and went to work as usual.—We were now making for the shore, in order to land a man who had begged a passage from Cairo. He was a Rais; and had served at Constantinople and elsewhere for twenty-five years, during which time he had never been home. For many years he had had no tidings of wife or children; and now, when within a mile or two of his home, he showed no signs of perturbation. He made his acknowledgments to us with an easy cheerful grace, put off his bright red slippers, and descended into the mud, and then thrust his muddy feet into his new slippers with an air of entire tranquillity. We watched him as long as we could see him among the palms, and should have been glad to know how he found all at home.—The scene around looked far indeed out of the bounds of Christendom, this Christmas-day, till I saw, on a steep, the ruins of the Coptic convent of St. George. Aswán was now peeping over the palms on the eastern shore; and opposite to it was the island of Elephantine,—half rubbish, half verdure. We moored to the shore below

Aswán just at two o'clock; and thus we kept our appointment, to dine at the First Cataract on Christmas Day. Our dinner included turkey and plum-pudding. Our Arab cook succeeded well with the last-mentioned novelty. We sent a huge cantle of it to the Rais, who ate it all in a trice, and gave it his emphatic approbation.

CHAPTER VI.

ASWÁN.—SLAVES.—FIRST RIDE IN THE DESERT.—QUARRIES.—ELEPHANTINE.—RIVER SCENERY.—PREPARATIONS FOR NUBIA.—FIRST SIGHT OF PHILŒ.

As soon as our plank was down, a sort of mob-market was formed on shore. There was a display of a stuffed crocodile, spears, ebony clubs, straw-baskets, coins, walking sticks, an ostrich's egg, a conjuror, &c. It was at this place that a girl offered me for sale an English halfpenny; and another the glass stopper of a little bottle. Here, as everywhere, my ear trumpet was handled and examined with quick curiosity: and in almost every case, from Nubia to the Lebanon, the immediate conclusion was the same. The inquirers put the small end to their lips, and gave a satisfied nod. It was clearly a pipe, with an enormous bowl! At Aswán, however, we staid long enough for the people to discover what the trumpet was for; and from the moment of the discovery, they did their best to enable me to do without it. As we passed through the lane they made for us, they pressed forwards to shout into my ears "baksheesh! baksheesh," till Alee pushed and flogged them away. I wonder at their perseverance in thus incessantly begging of strangers; for we could not learn that they ever got any thing by it. If, as it

appeared to me, travellers give only in return for service, or in consideration of some infirmity, the perseverance in begging seems wonderful. I saw at this place parents teaching a little one to speak: and the word they tried them with was "baksheesh." I saw a little fellow just able to carry his father's slippers,—which were almost as big as himself:—his father gave him a careful training in hugging the slippers with one arm, while he held out the other hand to me for baksheesh. —The people here were very good-looking. They cannot grow provisions enough for their numbers,—the desert encroaching too much to permit the cultivation of more land than the mere river banks: but they import enough for their wants. Their renowned dates are their principal article of exchange; and traffic goes on here in henneh, baskets, senna, charcoal and slaves from Upper Ethiopia and Abyssinia. Of course, it was impossible to learn their numbers. Nobody knows; and if any one knew, he would not tell. A census may be, and has been, ordered; but it cannot be executed. The popular dread of the Government renders it impossible. The fellahs (peasants) have such a terror of increased taxation and of the conscription, that they abscond on the mention of a census: and some who can afford it bribe the officials to suppress their names, and those of their families. The last thing that can be learned of any Egyptian town or district is its population.

The walls of the streets are blank here;—not a window, or break of any kind, but a low door here and there. The bazaars looked poor; and I believe the traffic is chiefly carried on elsewhere. We saw two slave-bazaars. One was an enclosure on the rising

ground above our boat. The slaves here were only five or six, and all children;—all under sixteen years of age. They were intelligent and cheerful-looking; and I recognised, at the first glance, the likeness to the old Egyptian countenance and costume. The girls had their faces uncovered; and their hair in the Ethiopian fashion,—precisely that which we see in the old sculptures and paintings. One little girl was preparing the pottage for their supper, very cleverly and earnestly. She was said to be fifteen; and 15*l.* was the sum asked for her.—The other bazaar was on the outskirts of the town, and near our boat. It contained, when we saw it on our return, a dozen boys, and about fifteen girls. Most of the girls were grinding millet between two stones, or kneading and baking cakes. They were freshly oiled, in good plight, and very intelligent-looking, for the most part. Some of them were really pretty in their way,—in the old Egyptian way. They appeared cheerful, and at home in their business; and there can scarcely be a stronger contrast than between this slave-market and those I had seen in the United States. The contrast is as strong as between the serfdom of the Egyptian, and the freedom of the American inhabitants of the respective countries: and of course, the first aspect of Slavery is infinitely less repulsive in Egypt than in America. What I learned, and may have to tell, of the life of the modern Egyptians proves, however, that the institution is no more defensible here than elsewhere.

I saw a little girl on the shore making cord, for tying round the waists of the men; and was extremely surprised to observe that the process is the same as

that of bobbinmaking with the lyre by English ladies. Instead of an ivory lyre, this child had two crossed sticks; and her cotton thread was very coarse. It was striking to see this little art existing in places so widely apart.

We walked, this afternoon, to the ruins of the old town, and overlooked its desolation from the top of the rock above the river. The translation of the name of this town is "the Opening:" and a great opening this once was, before the Nile had changed its character in Ethiopia, and when the more ancient races made this rock their watch-tower on the frontier between Egypt and the South.

That the Nile has changed its character, south of the First Cataract, has been made clear by some recent examination of the shores and monuments of Nubia. Dr. Lepsius has discovered watermarks so high on the rocks, and edifices so placed as to compel the conviction that the bed of the Nile has sunk extraordinarily, by some great natural process, either of convulsion or wear.* The apparent exaggerations of some old writers about the Cataracts at Syene may thus be in some measure accounted for. If there really was once a cataract here, instead of the rapids of the present day, there is some excuse for the reports given from hearsay, by Cicero and Seneca. Cicero says that "the river throws itself headlong from the loftiest mountains, so that those who live nearest are deprived of the sense of hearing, from the greatness of the noise." Seneca's account is,—"When some people were stationed there

* Appendix C.

by the Persians, their ears were so stunned with the constant roar, that it was found necessary to remove them to a more quiet place."—Supposing the Cataract formerly to have been of any height rendered necessary by the discoveries of Dr. Lepsius, it is clear that Syene must have been the station for the transshipment of merchandise passing north or south. The granite quarries, too, whence much of the building material of old Egypt was drawn, must have added to the business of the place. It is clear, accordingly, that this was, in all former times, a station of great importance. There were temples at Elephantine, to guard the interests of the neighbourhood, and to attract and gratify strangers. There was a Nilometer, to give tidings of the deposits of the great god Nilus. There was a garrison in the time of the Persians, and again in that of the Greeks: and Roman fortifications stand in ruin on the heights around. The Saracenic remains are obvious enough; and thus we have, on this frontier spot, and visible from the rock on which we stood, evidence of this place having been prized by successive races as the Opening which its present name declares it to be.

The ruins of the Saracenic town make their site desolate beyond description:—more desolate to my eyes, if possible, than the five acres I saw laid waste by the great New York fire. Two women were sitting under the wall of a roofless house, with no neighbours but a few prowling dogs. They warned me away till they saw the rest of my party coming up the ascent.—The island of Elephantine, opposite, looked as if just laid waste by an earthquake, scarcely one stone being left upon another of all its once grand edifices. On its

rocks were hieroglyphic inscriptions, many and deeply carved.—In a hollow of the desert behind us lay the great cemetery, where almost every grave has its little stone, with a Cufic inscription. The red granite was cropping up everywhere; and promontories and islets of black basalt began to show themselves in the river. Behind us, at the entrance of the desert, were the mountainous masses of granite where we were to-morrow to look for the celebrated quarries, and their deserted obelisk. Before we came down from our point of survey, we saw the American party crossing, in a ferry-boat, to Elephantine. They had arrived after us, and were to set out on their return to Cairo the next day!

As we sat on deck under our awning this evening, the scene was striking;—the brilliant moonlight resting on the quiet groves, but contending on the shore with the yellow glow from the west, which gilded the objects there; and especially the boat-building near the water's edge;—the crews forming picturesque groups, with their singing, clapping and dancing, while close beside them, and almost among them, were the Rais and two other men going through their prayers and prostrations. This boat-building was the last we saw up the river: and a rude affair it was:—the planks not planed, and wide apart, and irregular.

A kandjia was here which had brought a party of Turkish officers. We had the offer of it, to take us to the Second Cataract; our dahabieh being, of course, too large to ascend the Cataract here. Our gentlemen thought it would not do;—that Mrs. Y. and I could not put up with its accommodations, even for a

fortnight. We thought we could: but we agreed that the first thing to be done was to go to the head of the Cataract, and see what boats could be had there.

The next morning, therefore, we had breakfast early, and set off on asses for Mahatta,—the village at the head of the Cataract. This, our first ride in the Desert, was full of wonder and delight. It was only about three miles: but it might have been thirty from the amount of novelty in it. Our thick umbrellas, covered with brown holland, were a necessary protection against the heat, which would have been almost intolerable, but for the cool north wind.—I believed before that I had imagined the Desert: but now I felt that nobody could. No one could conceive the confusion of piled and scattered rocks, which, even in a ride of three miles, deprives a stranger of all sense of direction, except by the heavens. These narrow passes among black rocks, all suffocation and glare, without shade or relief, are the very home of despair. The oppression of the sense of sight disturbs the brain, so that the will of the unhappy wanderer cannot keep his nerves in order. I thought of poor Hagar here, and seemed to feel her story for the first time. I thought of Scotch shepherds lost in the snow, and of their mild case in comparison with that of Arab goat-herds lost in the Desert. The difference is of death by lethargy and death by torture. We were afterwards in the depth of Arabia, and lived five weeks in tents in the Desert: but no Arabian scene impressed me more with the characteristics of the Desert than this ride of three miles from Aswán to Mahatta. The presence of dragon-flies in the Desert surprised me;—not only here, but in places

afterwards—where there appeared to be no water within a great distance. To those who have been wont to watch the coming forth of the dragon-fly from its sheath on the rush on the margin of a pool, and flitting about the mountain watercourse, or the moist meadows at home, it is strange to see them by dozens glittering in the sunshine of the Desert, where there appears to be nothing for them to alight on;—nothing that would not shrivel them up, if they rested for a moment from the wing. The hard dry locust seemed more in its place, and the innumerable beetles, which everywhere left a net-work of delicate tracks on the light sand. Distant figures are striking in the desert, in the extreme clearness of light and shade. Shadows strike upon the sense here as bright lights do elsewhere. It seems to me that I remember every figure I ever saw in the Desert;—every veiled woman tending her goats, or carrying her water-jar on her head;—every man in blue skirting the hillocks; every man in brown guiding his ass or his camel through the sandy defiles of the black rocks, or on a slope by moonlight, when he casts a long shadow. Every moving thing has a new value to the eye in such a region.

When we came out upon Mahatta, we were in Nubia, and found ourselves at once in the midst of the wildness of which we had read so much in relation to the First Cataract. The Mississippi is wild: and the Indian grounds of Wisconsin, with their wigwam camps, are wild: but their wildness is only that of primitive Nature. This is fantastic,—impish. It is the wildness of Prospero's island. Prospero's island and his company of servitors were never out of my head between

Aswán and the next placid reach of the river above Philœ.—The rocks are not sublime: they are too like Titanic heaps of black paving-stones to be imposing otherwise than by their oddity: and they are strewn about the land and river to an excess and with a caprice which takes one's imagination quite out of the ordinary world. Their appearance is made the more strange by the cartouches and other hieroglyphic inscriptions which abound among them;—sometimes on a face above the river; sometimes on a mere ordinary block near the path;—sometimes on an unapproachable fragment in the middle of the stream. When we emerged from the Desert upon Mahatta, the scene was somewhat softened by the cultivation behind the village, and the shade of the spreading sycamores and clustered palms. Heaps of dates, like the wheat in our granaries for quantity, lay piled on the shore; and mounds of packages (chiefly dates) ready for export. The river was all divided into streamlets and ponds by the black islets. Where it was overshadowed, it was dark grey or deep blue; but where the light caught it, rushing between a wooded island and the shore, it was of the clearest green. —The people were wild,—especially the boys, who were naked and excessively noisy: but I did not dislike their behaviour, which was very harmless, though they had to be flogged out of the path, like a herd of pigs.—We saw two boats, and immediately became eager to secure the one below. I was delighted at this, as we were thus not deprived of the adventure of ascending the Cataract.

On our return, we sent Alee forward to secure the kandjia; and we diverged to the quarries, passing

through the great cemetery with its curious grave-stones, inscribed in the Cufic character. The marks of the workmen's tools are as distinct as ever on the granite of the quarries. There are the rows of holes for the wooden pegs or wedges which, being wetted, expanded and split the stone. There are the grooves and the notches made, by men who died several thousands of years ago, in preparation for works which were never done. There are the playful or idle scratches made by men of old in a holiday mood. And there, too, is the celebrated obelisk, about which, I must take leave to say, some mistakes are current at this day.

It may look like trifling to spend any words on the actual condition of an obelisk in the quarry: but, if we really wish to know how the ancients set about works which modern men are unable to achieve, we must collect all the facts we can about such works, leaving it for time to show which are important and which are not. We spend many words in wondering what could be the mechanical powers known to the old Egyptians, by which they could detach, lift, carry, and dress such masses of stone as our resources are wholly inadequate to deal with. When we chance to meet with one such mass in a half-finished state, it is surely worth while to examine and report upon its marks and peculiarities, however unaccountable, as one step towards learning hereafter, how they came there.

This obelisk was declared, by a traveller who judged naturally by the eye, to be lying there unfinished because it was broken before it was completely detached from the rock. Other travellers have repeated the tale,—one measuring the mass, and taking for granted that an

irregular groove along the upper surface was the "crack,"—the "fissure;" and another, comfortably seated on an ass, not even getting down to touch it at all. Our friend, Mr. E., was not satisfied without looking into things with his own eyes and his own mind: and he not only measured and poked in the sand, but cleared out the sand from the grooves till he had satisfied himself that there is no breakage or crack about the obelisk at all.

The upper surface is (near the centre of its length,) about two feet broad: and there is every appearance of the other three sides having the same measurement,—as the guide says they have,—allowing for the inequalities of the undressed stone. There is no evidence that it is not wholly detached from the rock. Of course, we moderns cannot move it; but the guide declares that, when cleared of sand, a stick may be passed under in every part. And it seems improbable that the apex of the obelisk should be reduced to form before the main body is severed from the rock.—As for the supposed "fissure," it is certainly a carefully wrought groove, and no crack. Its sides are as smooth as any tablet; and its breadth appears to be uniform;—about an inch wide at the top. Its depth is about three inches; and it is smooth and sound all along the bottom. Near it is a slight fault in the stone; a skin-deep crack,—little more than a roughness of the surface. Across the upper face were some remarkable holes. Besides those which are usually prepared for wedges or pegs, there were two deep grooves, slanting and not parallel. If they had been straight and parallel, we should have immediately supposed them intended to hold the chains

or ropes by which the mass was to be raised: and it is still possible that they were so. But we do not know what to make of the groove which is commonly called the fissure. It is deep; it is longitudinal; and it is devious; not intended, evidently, to bear any relation to the centre of the face, nor to be parallel with either side, nor to be straight in its direction. The only conjecture we could form was that it was in preparation for the dressing of the stone, after the erection of the obelisk: but then its depth appears too great for such a purpose. We observed a considerable bulge on the upper face of this obelisk. We all know that this is necessary, to obviate that optical deception which gives an appearance of concavity to a perfectly correct pyramidal line: and we all know that the old Egyptians so well understood this architectural secret that they might be the teachers of it to all the world. But the knowledge of this does not lessen the surprise, when the proof of it, in so gigantic a form, is under one's hand.—The block was ninety feet long above the sand, when we were there; and the guide said that the sand covered thirty more. Judging of the proportions of the apex from what we saw, it must either require much cutting away in the dressing, or be a little spire. It would doubtless be much reduced by cutting.—We left the quarries, full of speculation about what manner of men they were who cut and carved their granite mountains in this noble style, and by what inconceivable means they carried away their spoils. It would hardly surprise me more to see a company of ants carrying a life-size statue, than it did to measure the building stones and colossi of the East.

In our walk this evening we saw a pretty encampment of Albanian soldiers among the palms. One had to rub one's eyes to be sure that one was not in a theatre. The open tent, with the blue smoke rising, the group of soldiers, in their Greek dress, on the ground, and seen between the palm stems; the arms piled against a tree, and glittering in the last rays of the sun;—all this was like a sublimated opera scene. And there was another, the next morning, when they took their departure southwards, their file of loaded camels winding away from under the shade into the hot light.

We went early to Elephantine, this morning (the 27th) after seeing the Scotch boat arrive. The remains on Elephantine are not now very interesting;—at least, we did not find them so: and we do not enter into the ordinary romance about this "Island of Flowers." Not only we saw no flowers; but we could perceive no traces of any: and our guide could not be made to understand what flowers were. Conversation was carried on in Italian, of which the man appeared to have no lack. First he said there were many flowers there: then that there were none: and he ended by asking what "fiori" were. He shook his head in despair when we showed him. The northern end of the island is green and fertile: but the southern end is one dreary heap of old stones and broken pottery. The quantity of broken pottery in these places is unaccountable,—incredible.

The quays are gone, and the great flight of steps to the river. The little ancient temple of Kneph is gone; and another, and the upper portion of the Nilometer were pulled down, some years since, to supply building

stone for an official's palace at Aswán. We saw, at the Nilometer, sculptured stones built in among rough ones,—some being upside down,—some set on end. And this is all we could make out of this edifice. There is a granite gateway of the time of Alexander; and this is the only erect work of any interest.—There is a statue of red granite, with the Osiride emblems;—a mean and uncouth image, in comparison with most that we saw. Some slender and broken granite pillars lie about, a little to the north of the gateway: and one of them bears a sculptured cross; which shows that they were part of a Christian temple.

The people on the island are Nubians. Many of their faces, as well as their forms, are fine: and they have the same well-fed and healthy appearance as we observe among the people generally, all along the great valley, and especially in the Nubian part of it. Some of the children were naked; some had ragged clothing; and many were dressed in substantial garments, though of the dusty or brown colours which convey an impression of dirt to an English eye. The children's hair was shining, even dripping with the castor-oil which was to meet our senses everywhere in Nubia.

Our Scotch friends called while we were at breakfast, and offered us their small boat for an expedition to Philœ. Much as I longed to see Philœ, I was startled at the idea of going by water in a small boat, as a mere morning trip: and I was sorry to see our saddles put away, as it appeared to me more practicable to go by the shorter way of the desert, taking a boat from Mahatta. If we had known what we soon learned about the water passage, we should not have dreamed of

such an adventure. My next uneasiness was at finding that we were going with only Arab rowers, without an interpreter. It certainly was foolish: but the local Rais had arranged the affair; and it was not for us to dispute the wisdom of the man who must know best. I am glad we went; for we obtained admirable views of this extraordinary part of the river, at more leisure, and with more freedom than when ascending the Cataract in our kandjia, amidst the hubbub of a hundred natives.

The wear of the rocks by thousands of annual inundations exhibits singular effects, in holes, unaccountable fissures, grotesque outlines, and gigantic piling up of blocks. The last deposit of soil on the slopes of smooth stones, and in every recess and crevice, reminded me of the odd tillage one sees in Switzerland, where a miniature field is made on the top of a boulder, by confining the deposited earth with a row of stones. And when we were driven to land, in the course of the morning, it was striking to see in what small and parched recesses a few feet of millet and vetches were grown, where the soil would yield anything. The deposit was always graduated, always in layers, however little there might be of it. In some stones in the middle of the current, there were wrought grooves, and holes for wedges; for what purpose, and whether these stones were always in the middle of the current, let those say who can. They looked like a preparation for the erection of colossal statues, which would have a finer effect amidst this frontier cataract than any Madonna del Mare has amidst the lagoons of Venice. The water here was less turbid than we had yet seen it. Its gushings round the rocks were glorious to see, and, in my opinion, to

feel, as we made directly towards them, in order to be swirled away by them to some opposite point which we could not otherwise reach. The only time I was really startled was when we bumped tremendously upon a sunken rock. I saw, however, that the rowers were confident and merry; and when this is the case with local residents, in any critical passage of foreign travel, one may always feel secure. Remembering this, I found our hard won passages through sharp little rapids, and the eagerness and hubbub of the rowers delightful. But all did not find it so: and truly there was a harum-scarum appearance about the adventure which justified a pause and reconsideration what we should do.

It was impossible to obtain any information from the Arabs. Pantomime may go a good way with any people in Europe, from a general affinity of ideas, and of their signs, which prevails over a continent where there is a nearly uniform civilisation. But it avails nothing, and is even misleading, between Europeans and the natives of Oriental countries. Our gentlemen were much given to pantomime, in the absence of an interpreter; and it was amusing to me to see, with the practised eye of a deaf person, how invariably they were misunderstood; and often, when they had no suspicion of this themselves. They naturally employed many conventional signs; and, of course, so did the Arabs: and such confusion arose out of this that I begged my friends never to put down in their journals any information which they believed they had obtained by means of pantomime. It might be that while they were inquiring about a pyramid, the Arabs might be replying about the sun: while they were asking

questions about distance, the Arabs might be answering about ploughing: and so on. To-day we could make out nothing: so we offered very intelligible signs that we wished to land. We landed in a cove of a desert region on the eastern shore: and while Mr. E. was drawing maps on the sand, and the rowers were clamouring and gesticulating about him, I made for a lofty pile of rocks, a little way inland, to seek for a panoramic view. It was dreadfully hot: but I obtained a magnificent view of the river, as well as the surrounding country; by far the finest view of the Cataract that offered.—I could see nothing of Philœ, which was in fact hidden behind the eastern promontories: but from the great sweep the river made above us, and the indescribable intricacy of its channels among its thousand scattered rocks, it seemed plain to me that it would take some hours to reach the Sacred Island. I reported accordingly; and Mr. E. thought he had ascertained from the crew that it would take three hours to get to Philœ. As it was by this time one o'clock, we decided to return. It afterwards appeared that the three hours the men spoke of were from our dahabieh to Philœ: but I am sure it would have taken much more.

From my point of observation, I had seen that several weirs were constructed among the rapids, where a few blackies were busy,—some leaning over from the rocks, and others up to their shoulders in the stream. Their dusky figures contrasted finely with the glittering waters; and it was a truly savage African scene. One man came swimming to us, with a log under his breast, bringing a fish half as big as himself. It was

like a gigantic perch; we bought it for 7½*d.*, and found it better than Nile fish usually are.—I have often read of the great resource the Egyptians have in the fish of their river. They do not seem to prize it much; and I do not wonder. We thought the Nile fish very poor in quality, and commended the natives for eating in preference the grain and pulse which their valley yields in abundance.

Several people had collected,—there is no saying from whence—in our cove to see us depart: and I was glad they did; for their figures on the rocks were beautiful. One little naked boy placed himself on the top of a great boulder in an attitude of such perfect grace,—partly sitting, partly kneeling, with his hands resting on one foot,—that I longed to petrify him, and take him home, an ebony statue, for the instruction of sculptors. There is no training any English child to imitate him. An attitude of such perfect grace must be natural: but not, I suppose, in our climate, or to any one who has sat on chairs.

Our return, with the current, was smooth, pleasant and speedy. We found that the kandjia had been cleaned, sunk, (three drowned rats being the visible result of the process) raised, and dried; and the stores were now being laid in: and to-morrow we were to go up to the Rapids, to leave the next day clear for the ascent of the Cataract.—This evening was so warm that Mrs. Y. and I walked on the shore for some time without bonnet or shawl; the first and last occasion, no doubt, of our doing so by moonlight on the 27th of December.

The next morning I rose early, to damp and fold

linen; and I was ironing till dinner-time, that we might carry our sheets and towels in the best condition to the kandjia. No one would laugh at, or despise this who knew the importance, in hot countries, of the condition of linen; and none who have not tried can judge of the difference in comfort of ironed linen and that which is rough dried. By sparing a few hours per week, Mrs. Y. and I made neat and comfortable the things washed by the crew; and when we saw the plight of other travellers,—gentlemen in rough dried collars, and ladies in gowns which looked as if they had been merely wrung out of the wash-tub, we thought the little trouble our ironing cost us well bestowed. Every body knows now that to take English servants ruins every thing,—destroys all the ease and comfort of the journey; and the Arabs cannot iron. They cannot comprehend what it is for. One boat's crew last year decided, after a long consultation, that it was the English way of killing lice. This was not our crew: but I do not think ours understood to the last the meaning of the weekly ceremony of the flat-iron. The dragoman of another party, being sounded about ironing his employer's white trowsers, positively declined the attempt; saying that he had once tried, and at the first touch had burnt off the right leg. If any lady going up the Nile should be so happy as to be able to iron, I should strongly advise her putting up a pair of flat-irons among her baggage. If she can also starch, it will add much to her comfort and that of her party, at little cost of time and trouble.

We went on board our kandjia to dinner, at two

o'clock, and were off for the entrance of the Cataract. The smallness of our boat, after our grand dahabieh, was the cause of much amusement, both to-day and during the fortnight of our Nubian expedition. In the inner cabin there was only just room for Mrs. Y. and me by laying our beds close together; and our dressing-room was exactly a yard square. The gentlemen's cabin was somewhat larger; but not roomy enough to admit of our having our meals there,—unless a strong cold wind drove us in to tea;—which I think happened twice. Our sitting room was a pretty little vestibule, between the cabins and the deck. This exactly held our table and two chairs; the other seats being two lockers, on which were spread gay carpets. When we sat down to our morning employments, we were careful to bring at once all the books, &c., that we were likely to want, as we could not pass in and out without compelling our neighbours to rise to make way. For all this, and though we felt, on our return to our dahabieh, as if we had got from a coaster into a man-of-war, we were never happier than in our little kandjia. There was some amusement in roughing it for a fortnight; and the Nubian part of our voyage was full as interesting as any other.

The Rais of the Cataract was to meet us, the next morning, with his posse, at a point fixed on, above the first rapid, which we were to surmount ourselves. We appeared to be surmounting it, just at dusk. Half our crew were hauling at our best rope on the rocks, and the other half poling on board; and we were slowly,—almost imperceptibly—making way against the rushing current, and had our bows fairly through the last mass

of foam, when the rope snapped. We swirled down and away,—none of us knew whither, unless it were to the bottom of the river. This was almost the most anxious moment of our whole journey: but it was little more than a moment. The boat, in swinging round at the bottom of the rapid, caught by her stern on a sand bank: and our new Rais quickly brought her round, and moored her, in still water, to the bank.

Here we were for the night: and we thought it a pity not to take advantage of the leisure and the moonlight to visit Philœ. So the gentlemen and I crossed the rapids to the main in a punt, mounted capital asses, and struck across the desert for Mahatta, where we could get a boat for Philœ.

The sun had just set when we left the kandjia; and the Desert looked superb in the after glow. It had the last depth of colouring I have ever seen in pictures, or heard described. The clear forms and ravishing hues make one feel as if gifted with new eyes.

The boat which took us from Mahatta to Philœ was too heavy for her hands, and could hardly stem some of the currents: but at last, about seven o'clock, we set our feet on the Holy Island, and felt one great object of our journey accomplished. What a moment it was, just before, when we first saw Philœ, as we came round the point,—saw the crowd of temples looming in the mellow twilight! And what a moment it was now, when we trod the soil, as sacred to wise old races of men as Mecca now to the Mohammedan, or Jerusalem to the Christian; the huge propyla, the sculptured walls, the colonnades, the hypæthral * temple all standing, in

* Hypæthral—open to the sky.

full majesty, under a flood of moonlight! The most sacred of ancient oaths was in my mind all the while, as if breathed into me from without;—the awful oath "By Him who sleeps in Philœ." Here, surrounded by the imperishable Nile, sleeping to the everlasting music of its distant Cataract, and watched over by his Isis, whose temple seems made to stand for ever, was the beneficent Osiris believed to lie. There are many Holy Islands scattered about the seas of the world: the very name is sweet to all ears: but no one has been so long and so deeply sacred as this. The waters all round were, this night, very still; and the more suggestive were they of the olden age when they afforded a path for the processions of grateful worshippers, who came from various points of the mainland, with their lamps, and their harps, and their gifts, to return thanks for the harvests which had sprung and ripened at the bidding of the god. One could see them coming in their boats, there where the last western light gleamed on the river: one could see them land at the steps at the end of the colonnade: and one could imagine this great group of temples lighted up till the prominent sculpture of the walls looked almost as bright and real as the moving forms of the actual offerers.—But the silence and desertion of the place soon made themselves felt. Our footsteps on the loose stones, and our voices in an occasional question, and the flapping wings of the birds whom we disturbed were the only sounds: and the lantern which was carried before us in the shadowy recesses was a dismal light for such a place.—I could not, under the circumstances, make out any thing of the disposition of the buildings: and I think that a visit to Philœ by moonlight had better be preceded by a visit

to Philœ by daylight: but I am glad to have seen the solemn sight, now that I can look back upon it with the fresh eyes of clear knowledge of the site and its temples.

A kandjia lay under the bank when we arrived. It had brought our Scotch friends from Mahatta; and we found them in the court of the hypæthral temple, sitting on the terrace wall in the moonlight,—the gentlemen with their chibouques,—the ladies with their bonnets in their hands. Their first and last view of Philœ was on this lovely night: and this was our last sight of them. They were to set off down the river the next morning, at the same hour that we were to begin the ascent of the Cataract. Our greetings, our jokes, our little rivalries were all over; and the probability was that we should never meet again.—How sorry we were for them that they were turning back! We not only had Nubia, with its very old temples,—and above all, Aboo-Simbil*—full in prospect, but a return to this island, to obtain a clear knowledge of it. My heart would have been very heavy to-night if this had been my only view of Philœ;—a view so obscure, so tantalizing, and so oppressive: and I was sorry accordingly for those who were to see it but once, and thus.

Our desert ride in the moonlight was very fine, among such lights and shadows as I never saw by night before. We encountered no hyænas, though our guide carried a musket, in expectation that we should. We crossed the rapids in safety, and reached our boat excessively tired, and the more eager for rest because the next was to be the greatest day of our journey,—unless perhaps that of our passing Thebes.

* Ipsamboul.

CHAPTER VII.

ASCENT OF THE CATARACT.

SUCH an event as the ascent of the Cataract can happen but once in one's life; and we would not hear of going ashore on any such plea as that the feat could be better seen from thence. What I wanted was to feel it. I would have gone far to see a stranger's boat pulled up; but I would not refuse the fortune of being on board when I could. We began, however, with going ashore at the Rapid where we failed the evening before. The rope had been proved untrustworthy; and there was no other till we joined the Rais of the Cataract, with his cable and his posse. Our Rais put together three weak ropes, which were by no means equivalent to one strong one: but the attempt succeeded.

It was a curious scene,—the appearing of the dusky natives on all the rocks around; the eager zeal of those who made themselves our guards, holding us by the arms, as if we were going to jail, and scarcely permitting us to set our feet to the ground, lest we should fall; and the daring plunges and divings of man or boy, to obtain our admiration or our baksheesh. A boy would come riding down a slope of roaring water as confidently as I would ride down a sand-hill on my ass. Their arms, in their fighting method of swimming, go

round like the spokes of a wheel. Grinning boys poppled in the currents; and little seven-year-old savages must haul at the ropes, or ply their little poles when the kandjia approached a spike of rock, or dive to thrust their shoulders between its keel and any sunken obstacle: and after every such feat, they would pop up their dripping heads, and cry "baksheesh." I felt the great peculiarity of this day to be my seeing, for the first, and probably the only time of my life, the perfection of savage faculty: and truly it is an imposing sight. The quickness of movement and apprehension, the strength and suppleness of frame, and the power of experience in all concerned this day contrasted strangely with images of the bookworm and the professional man at home, who can scarcely use their own limbs and senses, or conceive of any control over external realities. I always thought in America, and I always shall think, that the finest specimens of human development I have seen are in the United States, where every man, however learned and meditative, can ride, drive, keep his own horse, and roof his own dwelling: and every woman, however intellectual, can do, if necessary, all the work of her own house. At home, I had seen one extreme of power, in the meagre helpless beings whose prerogative lies wholly in the world of ideas: here I saw the other, where the dominion was wholly over the power of outward nature: and I must say I as heartily wished for the introduction of some good bodily education at home as for intellectual enlightenment here. I have as little hope of the one as of the other; for there is at present no natural necessity for either: and nothing short of natural compulsion will avail.

Gymnastic exercises and field sports are matters only of institution and luxury,—good as far as they go, but mere conventional trifles in the training of a man or a nation: and, with all our proneness to toil, I see no prospect of any stimulus to wholesome general activity arising out of our civilisation. I wish that, in return for our missions to the heathen, the heathens would send missionaries to us, to train us to a grateful use of our noble natural endowments,—of our powers of sense and limb, and the functions which are involved in their activity. I am confident that our morals and our intellect would gain inestimably by it. There is no saying how much vicious propensity would be checked, and intellectual activity equalised in us by such a reciprocity with those whose gifts are at the other extreme from our own.

Throughout the four hours of our ascent, I saw incessantly that though much is done by sheer force,—by men enough pulling at a rope strong enough,—some other requisites were quite as essential:—great forecast, great sagacity; much nice management among currents, and hidden and threatening rocks; and much knowledge of the forces and subtilties of wind and water. The men were sometimes plunging, to heave off the boat from a spike or ledge; sometimes swimming to a distant rock, with a rope between their teeth, which they carried round the boulders;—then squatting upon it, and holding the end of the rope with their feet, to leave their hands at liberty for hauling. Sometimes a man dived, to free the cable from a catch under water; then he would spring on board, to pole at any critical pass: and then ashore, to join the long file

who were pulling at the cable. Then there was their patience and diligence—very remarkable when we went round and round an eddy many times, after all but succeeding, and failing again and again from the malice of the wind. Once this happened for so long, and in such a boisterous eddy, that we began to wonder what was to be the end of it. Complicated as were the currents in this spot, we were four times saved from even grazing the rocks, when, after having nearly got through, we were borne back, and swung round to try again. The fifth time, there came a faint breath of wind, which shook our sail for a moment, and carried us over the ridge of foam. What a shout there was when we turned into still water! The last ascent but one appeared the most wonderful,—the passage was, twice over, so narrow,—barely admitting the kandjia,—the promontory of rock so sharp, and the gush of water so strong: but the big rope, and the mob of haulers on the shore and the islets heaved us up steadily, and as one might say, naturally,—as if the boat took her course advisedly.

Though this passage appeared to us the most dangerous, it was at the last that the Rais of the Cataract interfered to request us to step ashore. We were very unwilling; but we could not undertake the responsibility of opposing the local pilot. He said it was mere force that was wanted here, the difficulty being only from the rush of the waters, and not from any complication of currents. But no man would undertake to say that the rope would hold; and if it did not, destruction was inevitable. The rope held; we saw the boat drawn up steadily and beautifully; and the work was done.

Mr. E., who has great experience in nautical affairs, said that nothing could be cleverer than the management of the whole business. He believed that the feat could be achieved nowhere else, as there are no such swimmers elsewhere.

The mob who took charge of us on the rocks were horribly noisy: the granite we trod on was burning hot, shining and slippery: the light, at an hour after noon, was oppressive: and the wildness of the scenery and of the thronging people was bewildering. The clamour was the worst; and for four hours there was no pause. This is, I think, the only thing in the whole affair really trying to a person of good nerves. The cries are like those of rage and fear; and one has to remind one's self incessantly that this is only the people's way: and then the clamour goes for nothing. When they do speak gently, as to us on matters of business, their voices are agreeable enough, and some very sweet.—Most of the throng to-day were quite black: some tawny. One man looked very odd. His complexion was chocolate colour, and his breast and top-knot red.

We returned to the boat heated and thirsty, and quite disposed for wine and water. The critical passage of four hours was over; but the Rais of the Cataract did not leave us till we were off Mahatta, there being still much skill and labour required to pass us through the yet troubled waters. Our boat rolled a good deal, having but little ballast as yet: and when we were about to go to dinner, a lurch caused the breakage of some soup plates and other ware: so we put off dinner till we should be at Philœ, where we were to complete our ballast.—Meantime, we had the poor amusement of

seeing a fight on shore,—the Rais and his men quarrelling about the baksheesh. The pay of the Rais and his men was included in the contract for the kandjia: but of course the Rais asked for baksheesh. He was offered ten piastres, and refused them; then a bottle of wine, which he put under his arm, demanding the ten piastres too. Then he refused both, and went off; but returned for the money; and ended by fighting about the division of it. The amount is small to contend about; but travellers should remember those who come after them, and the real good of the natives; and not give way to encroachment, to save a little trouble.

It was four o'clock when we moored at Philœ under what once was the great landing place of the island, on the east side. The hypæthral temple, vulgarly called Pharaoh's Bed, stood conspicuous on the height above us: and we ran up to it after sunset, while the last of our ballast was stowing,—glad of every opportunity of familiarising our minds with the aspect of the island, before returning to explore the remains in due order.—We had seen nothing more beautiful anywhere than what was before us this evening on our departure by moonlight. The pillars of the open temple first, and then the massive propyla of the great temple stood up against the soft, clear sky, and palms fringed every bank, and crowned every little eminence. The wildness of the rocky boundary was lost, by this light. We felt that we had, for the present, done with rapids and islands: we were fairly in Nubia, and were now passing into the broad full stream of the Nile, here calmer than ever, from being so near the dam of the islands. The Lybian range shone distinctly yellow by moonlight.

I thought that I had never heard of colour by moonlight before; and I was sure I had never seen it. Now my eyes feasted on it night by night. The effect of palm clumps standing up before these yellow backgrounds, which are themselves bounded by a line of purple hills, with silver stars hanging above them, and mysterious heavenly lights gushing up from behind all, exceeds in rich softness any colouring that sunshine can show.

CHAPTER VIII.

NUBIA.—THE SECOND CATARACT.

We were not long in finding how different Nubia is from the lower part of the Nile valley, both in its aspect and its people. We soon began to admire these poor Berbers, for their industry and thrift, their apparent contentment, and their pleasant countenances. The blue underlip of the women, some tattoo marks here and there, nose rings, and hundreds of tiny braids of hair, all shining and some dripping with castor oil, might seem likely to make these people appear ugly enough to English eyes: but the open good humour of most of their countenances, and the pathetic thoughtfulness of many, rendered them interesting, I may say charming to us;—to say nothing of the likeness we were constantly tracing in them to the most ancient sculptured faces of the temples. The dyed underlip was the greatest drawback; perhaps from its having a look of disease. The women wore silver bracelets almost universally; and a quantity of bead necklaces. They swathed themselves sufficiently in their blue garments without covering their faces. The men wore very little clothing: the children, for the most part, none at all, except that the girls had a sort of leather fringe tied round the loins. Sometimes the people

would run away from us, or be on the start to do so as we were walking on the shore. Sometimes the women would permit us to bid for their necklaces, or would offer matting or baskets for sale. Sometimes we found their huts empty,—left open while the family were out at work: and we were glad of such an opportunity of examining their dwellings, and forming some notion of their household economy.

The first we entered in the absence of the inmates was a neat house,—the walls mud, and narrowing upwards, so as to give the building a slightly pyramidal form. Mud walls, it must be remembered, are in Nubia quite a different affair from what they are in rainy countries. The smooth plastering gives the dwelling a neat appearance, inside and out: and it is so firmly done, and so secure from wet in that climate, as not to crumble away, or, apparently, to give out dust, as it would with us.—The flat roof of this house was neatly made of palm: the stems lying along, and the fronds forming a sort of thatch. A deewan of mud was raised along the whole of both the side walls; and two large jars, not of the same size, were fixed at the end; one, no doubt, to hold water; the other, grain. The large jar for grain is often fixed outside the house, opposite the door: and we were assured that it is never plundered. Some dwellings have partitions, one or two feet high, separating, as we suppose, the sleeping-places of the family. If the peasant has the rare fortune of possessing a cow and calf, or if there is an ox in the establishment, to work the sakia, there is a mud shed, with a flat roof like the house. The fences are of dry millet stalks, which rise from eleven to fourteen feet

high. In the garden or field plot is often seen a pillar of stones, whereon stands the slinger, whose business it is to scare away the birds from the crops. The field plot is often no more than a portion of the sloping river bank. At the season of our visit the plots were full of wheat, barley and lupins. The kidney bean, with a purple blossom and very dark leaves, was beautiful: and so were the castor oil and cotton plants.

Behind the dwelling which we visited, the dark stony desert came down to the very path: and among its scattered rocks lay, not at once distinguishable to the eye, the primitive burying ground of the region. The graves were marked out with ovals of stones; and thorns were laid thick on the more recent ones. A dreary place it looked for the dead to lie in: but the view from it was beautiful; and especially of the hedge-like Lybian bank over the river, where the fringe of mimosas was all overgrown and compacted with bind-weed of the brightest green.

I do not at present see that much can be done for the Nubians, as there certainly may for the Egyptians. In Egypt, the population once amounted to 8,000,000, or nearly so; while now it is supposed to be not more than 2,500,000: and there seems no reason why it should not, with the knowledge and skill of our own time, rise to what it once was, and exceed it. Every-where there are tokens, even to the careless eye of a passing traveller, of land let out of cultivation,—yielded up without a struggle to the great old enemy, the Desert; and even to the encroachments of the friendly Nile. There are signs that drainage is as much wanted as irrigation. However much the natural face of the

country may be supposed to have changed, there is abundant evidence of wilful and careless lapse. In Nubia it is far otherwise. There, not only are the villages diminutive,—almost too small to be called hamlets,—and the sprinkling of people between them is so scanty as barely to entitle the country to be called inhabited, but this is clearly from the scarcity of cultivable land. That it was always so is hardly conceivable when we think of the number of temples still visible between the first and second cataracts, and the many villages declared by Pliny to have studded both shores: but that it is to be helped now, I do not see how any one can show who has beheld the hopeless yellow desert, with its black volcanic rocks, coming down to the very river. As the people have no raw material for any manufacture, it is not easy to tell how they could prosper by other kinds of industry, if Egypt supplied them ever so plentifully with food. It appeared to us that they were diligent and careful in making the most of what they have. As soon as we crossed their frontier, we saw the piers which they make,—the stone barriers built out into the stream to arrest the mud as it is carried down, and thus obtain new land. There are so many of these as to be mischievous in some parts; as, when these piers are opposite to each other, they alter the currents, and narrow the river.—We saw dusky labourers on the banks, toiling with the hoe, to form the soil into terraces and ledges, so as to make the most of it. From their diligence, it seems as if the Nubians had sufficient security to induce them to work: and their appearance is that of health, cheerfulness and content. What more can

be done for them, beyond perhaps improving their simple arts of life, it is difficult to say.

Simple enough, indeed, are their arts. Early one morning, when walking ashore, I came upon a loom which would excite the astonishment of my former fellow-townsmen, the Norwich weavers. A little pit was dug in the earth, under a palm;—a pit just big enough to hold the treadles and the feet of the weaver, who sits on the end of the pit. The beam was made of a slender palm stem, fixed into two blocks. The treadles were made of spines of the palm fixed into bits of stick. The shuttle was, I think, a forked twig. The cotton yarn was even, and the fabric good; that is, evenly woven. It was, though coarse, so thin that one might see the light through: but that was intended, and only appropriate to the climate. I might have wondered at such a fabric proceeding from such an apparatus, if I had not remembered the muslins of India, produced in looms as rude as this. It appears too, from the paintings in the tombs, that the old Egyptian looms were of nearly as simple a construction, though the people were celebrated for their exports of fine linen and woollen stuffs. The stout-looking gay chequered sails of the boats, and the diversified dresses of the people represented in the tombs, were no doubt the produce of the rude looms painted up beside them.—The baskets made by the Nubians are strong and good.—Their mats are neat; but neither so serviceable nor so pretty as those of India: but then, these people have not such material as the Hindoos.—Their rope-making is a pretty sight;—prettier even than an English ropewalk; though that is a treat to

the eye. We often saw men thus employed,—one end of their strands being tied to the top of a tall palm, while they stood at the other, throwing the strands round till they would twist no more.

As for the rent paid by the Nubians for their land,—what we learned is this: but it must be observed that it is very difficult, in these countries, to obtain reliable information. In the most civilized parts, there are so few data, and in the more primitive, the people are so little in the habit of communicating with persons who are not familiar with their condition and ways, that it is scarcely possible to find any uniformity of testimony on any matters of custom or arrangement,—even the simplest. When the people tell of their taxes, the English traveller finds them so enormous that he is incredulous, or too indignant to carry away any accurate knowledge of the facts, unless he remembers that taxes in Egypt are not the same thing as taxes in Europe.

As I understand the matter, it is thus, with regard to these Nubians.—The Pasha holds the whole land and river of Egypt and Nubia in fee-simple, except as much as he has given away, for its revenues, to favoured individuals: and his rents are included in what are called his taxes. In Egypt, the people pay tax on the land. In Nubia, they pay it on the sakias and palms. The palms, when large, pay a piastre and a quarter (about 3*d.*) each, per annum: when small, three-fourths of a piastre. Each sakia pays a tax of three hundred and fifty piastres, or 3*l.* 10*s.*; and the payer may appropriate as much land as the sakia will water. The quantity taken is usually from eight hundred to twelve hundred square yards.

The mode of collecting the taxes is quite another matter. By corruption in the agents, or a bad practice of taking the amount in kind, or on account, the collector fixing the marketable value of the produce, there may be cruel oppression. In Egypt, it is certain this oppression does exist to a dreadful extent. We did not happen to hear of it in Nubia; and I cannot say how it is there. But, be it as it may, it is a different question from the amount of tax.

What the peasant actually pays for is the land, as above mentioned, the water-wheel itself, the excavation in which it works, the shed under which it stands, and the ox or pair of oxen by which it is driven. How far his bargain answers to him must depend on the marketable value of his produce, in a country little affected by variations of seasons. He has not, however, the advantage of an open market. There is nobody at hand to buy, unless by the accident of a trading kandjia coming by; and he has not usually the means of sending far. The tax-collector must therefore commonly be his market; and not such an one as to enable the stranger to estimate his affairs with any accuracy. All we could do was to observe whether he seemed to have enough of his produce left over for the support of his family, and whether his land appeared to be well tilled. I can only repeat that the people we saw in Nubia looked generally healthful and contented; and that they seemed to be making the most of their little belts and corners of cultivable land. It is to be observed however, that we remarked a great number of ruined villages, and that we could obtain no answer from either dragoman or Rais as to how this happened. They

declared they did not know; and, for once, Alee had neither information nor theory to offer. Which was the popular enemy, the Desert or the Pasha, I cannot undertake to say.

Our kandjia was hired for twenty-five days, for the sum of 13*l.* 10*s.*; this including all the charges of ascending the Cataract, and of the crew,—(eight men) except the steersman. Of these eight men, I think four were from our dahabieh. Our rais, and the rest of our crew were left at Aswán, in charge of the boat and such of our property as we did not take with us. Among those whom we carried up were two of our quiet serviceable Nubians. Among those who remained behind was the Buck, as we called him: perhaps the least serviceable of the whole crew, and certainly the least quiet and most troublesome; but he was so extremely amusing with his pranks that we missed him, during this fortnight, more than we should a better lad.—Our other buffoon was with us,—the cook. An excellent cook he was; but I do not know that he was much else,—except a long story-teller and a consummate coxcomb. He was a bad riser in this (to him) winter weather; not a good hand at giving us breakfast early; and we were therefore not sorry that he declined going through the Desert with us afterwards. The manner of declining, however, smacked of his coxcombry. "I!" said he. "I go through the Desert to Syria! No, no: it is all very well for these English, whom nobody inquires after, to go and be killed in Syria: but I am a man whose life is of importance to his family. They may go without me." And we went with a better man in his place. During this

Nubian voyage, however, he was in his glory,—among stranger comrades who would listen to his long stories. As I sat on deck in the evenings, I used to see him at the bows, flattering himself that he was doing his proper work,—holding by the wings a poor fluttering turkey about to have its throat cut, and brandishing his great glittering knife, in the energy of his story-telling. How many times have I chafed at the suspense of one poor bird after another, thus held, head downwards, till the magniloquent cook should have finished his anecdote! He fed us well, however, making a variety very honourable to him in the mutton, fowls and eggs which we lived on during the voyage.—Beef and veal have been out of the question since the murrain in 1843. Since that time, the cattle have not been enough to work the sakias; and of course, there are none for food. Mr. Y. once had the luck to fall in with a piece of beef;—at least, we were assured it was beef: but the only good we got out of it was a lesson not to look for beef any more. There is great variety to be made out of a sheep, however, as our cook continually proved to us.—I have said that he succeeded well in our Christmas plum-pudding. The only fire we had last winter was that which he made with a pool of brandy in the middle of our pudding. Almost the only failure he made was with a goose which we got at Thebes. We thought much of this goose, as a change from the everlasting fowls and turkeys; but the cook boiled it; and it looked anything but tempting. His excuse was that he feared, if he roasted it, that it would be "stiff;" —meaning tough.

All the people on board, and we ourselves, found the

weather cold in Nubia;—that is, in the evenings and mornings; for at noon it was hot enough to make us glad of fans and water-melon. We entered the tropic at three P.M. of December 30th: and from that time till our return, we seemed sentenced to shiver early and late, in cold strong winds, such as we had hardly met with in the more northerly parts of the river.—But the mild nights when we were at anchor were delicious:—none more so than that of the first day of this year. We sauntered along the camel-track which ran between the shore and the fine overhanging rocks of the Arabian desert. The brilliant moonlight cast deep shadows on the sand, and showed us what mighty blocks had fallen, and how others were about to fall. These African nights, soft, lustrous and silent, are worth crossing the world to feel. We met a party of three men, a boy and a donkey,—one of the men carrying a spear. They returned our greeting courteously, but stopped to look after us in surprise. Their tread and ours was noiseless on the sand; and the only sound within that wide horizon was of a baying dog,—far away on the opposite shore.

The next morning we passed Korosko, and saw the surveying flag of M. Arnault, and the tents of his party of soldiers: but we could not learn how his survey and his search for water proceeded, in preparation for his road to the Red Sea. We were passing temples, from stage to stage, all the way up: and very clearly we saw them,—each standing on its platform of sand or rock: but we left them all for examination on our return. This return must now be soon:—we sighed to think how soon, when we met, on the morning of January 3rd, the

two boats of a party who told us that if we wished to send letters to England, we must prepare them, as some gentlemen were at Aboo-Simbil, and would presently be passing us. The great temple of Aboo-Simbil,—the chief object of our Nubian voyage, and almost at the extremity of it, so near us! It damped our spirits; but we wrote our letters; and before we had done, the expected boat came up. We little thought that morning, any of us, that our three parties would join in the Desert, and that we should live together in Arabia for five weeks. Yet so it turned out.

I had been watching the winds and the hours in the fear that we should pass Aboo-Simbil in the dark. But when I came on deck, on the morning of the 4th, I found, to my great joy, that we were only a few miles from it, while a fresh breeze was carrying us well on our course. We passed it before breakfast.

The façade is visible from a considerable distance: and as soon as it becomes visible, it fixes the eye by the singularity of such an object as this smoothed recess of the rugged rock. I found it unlike what I expected, and unlike, I thought, all the representations of it that I had seen. The portal looked low in proportion to the colossi: the façade was smaller, or at least narrower, than I had supposed; and the colossi much nearer together. The white-wash which Champollion (it is said) left on the face of the northernmost colossus has the curious effect of bringing out the expression of countenance, so as to be seen far off. Nothing can be more strange than so extremely distinct a revelation of a face, in every feature, perhaps a mile off. It is stranger than the first apparition of the goodly profile

of the bronze Borromeo, near Lago Maggiore: because not only the outline of the features stands out clear, but every prominence and shadow of the face. The expression of this colossus is very agreeable;—it is so tranquil and cheerful. We had not yet experienced the still stranger sensation of seeing a row of statues precisely alike in all respects. We did not feel it now: for one of the faces being white, and another being broken, and many details lost by distance, the resemblance was not complete enough to cause in us that singular emotion.

The smaller temple of "the Lady of Aboshek,"—Athor—beside the large one, is very striking, as seen from the river. The six statues on the façade stand out boldly between buttresses; and their reclining backwards against the rock has a curious effect. All about both temples are inscribed tablets, which look like doors opening into the rock.—We had now seen, for the first time, a rock temple: and we were glad that it was the noblest that we saw first. In estimating it, we must remember what Ethiopia was to the Egyptians of its time. The inscription "foreign land" is appended to the titles of Athor in the smaller temple: and the establishment of these edifices here is what it would have been to the Romans who, conquering Great Britain, should have carried their most solemn worship to the Orkneys, and enthroned it there in the noblest edifice they could erect. But we could not fully estimate this till we had examined the temple on our return: nor can my readers do so till the time comes for a fuller account of these great works.

The wind was favourable all day, and at night, as we

approached Wadee Halfa, very strong. It is to be wished that we had some full meteorological reports of these regions, both for the sake of science and the guidance of travellers. Every voyager, I believe, speaks of strong wind, and, in the travelling season, north wind, near Wadee Halfa. Has any one heard of calm weather there? On inquiry, on the spot, we were told that there is almost always a strong wind, and frequent gales: sometimes from the south, but usually from the north. This night we had experience of a Nile gale.

Our sail was rarely tied, any part of the way; and our Nubian Rais had it always held. To-night it was held by a careful personage, who minded his business. First, our foresail was taken in, as the wind rose. Then we went sounding on, the poles on each side being kept constantly going. Nevertheless, we struck on a sand-bank with a great shock, and the main-sail was let fly. Half-a-dozen poor fellows, already shivering with cold, went over the side, and heaved us off. The wind continued to rise; the night was growing dark; and presently we grounded again. The sail was let go; but it would not fly. The wind strengthened; the sail was obstinate, and the men who had sprung aloft to furl it could not get it in. We seemed to be slowly but surely going over: and for several minutes (a long time in such circumstances) it seemed to me that our only chance was in the mud-bank on which we had struck being within our depth. But it was a poor chance; for there was deep water and a strong current between us and the shore: and it was in an uninhabited part of the country. Of our own party, no one spoke. Mr. E. was the only one of us who understood these matters;

and as he stood on the watch, we would not interrupt him by questions. Indeed, the case was plain enough; and I saw under his calmness that he felt this to be, as he afterwards told me, the most anxious moment of our adventures. Alee flew about giving orders amidst the rush of the wind; and the cook worked at the poling with all his strength. Even at such a moment I could not but be struck with the lights from the kitchen and the cabin shining on the struggling men and restless sail which were descending together to the water, and on the figures of the Rais, Alee and another, as they stood on the gunwale, hauling at a rope which was fastened to the top of the mast. Amidst the many risks of the moment, the chief was that our tackle would not hold: and a crack was heard now and then among other awful noises. By this time, the inclination of the deck was such that it was impossible to stand, and I had to cling with all my strength to the window of the vestibule. For some time, the Rais feared to quit his hold of the rope on the gunwale; but at last he flung it away, threw off his clothes in a single instant, and sprang up the mast like a cat. His strong arms were what was wanted aloft. The sail was got in, and we righted. The standing straight on one's feet was like a strange new sensation after such a peril.

It was still some time before we were afloat again; and our crew were busy in the water till we were quite sorry for them. When we drifted off at last, our sail was spread again, and we went seething on through the opposing currents to find our proper anchorage at Wadee Halfa. And there again we had almost as much difficulty as before in getting in our sail. This is the

worst of the latteen sails which look so pretty, and waft one on so well. We were wrenched about, and carried down some way before we could moor.

The next morning was almost as cold as the night: but we preferred this to heat, as our business to-day was to ride through the western desert to the rock of Abooseer,—the furthest point of our African travel. Before breakfast, the gentlemen took a short walk on shore, being carried over the intervening mud. They saw a small village, and a school of six scholars. The boys wrote, to the master's dictation, with reed pens, on tablets of wood, smoothed over with some white substance. They wrote readily, and apparently well. The lesson was from the Kurán; and the master delivered it in a chaunting tone.

Two extremely small asses were brought down, to cross with us to the western bank. We crossed in a ferry-boat whose sail did not correspond very well with the climate. It was like a lace veil mended with ticking. Our first visit was to the scanty remains of an interesting old temple near the landing-place. On our way to it, we passed some handsome children, and a charming group of women under a large sycamore. We thought the people we saw here,—(the most southerly we should ever see—) open-faced and good-looking.—There are large cattle-yards and sheds in this scarcely-inhabited spot, which the Pasha has made a halting-place for his droves of cattle from Dongola. He continues to import largely from thence, to make up his losses from the murrain of 1843. We saw two large droves of as noble beasts as can be seen.

Near the remains of two other unmarked and less

interesting buildings stand the columns of the temple begun, if not wholly erected by two of the Theban kings, soon after the expulsion of the Shepherd race. The dates exist in the hieroglyphic inscriptions of the pillars. This temple was built when the great edifices of Thebes were, for the most part, unthought of. El-Karnac was begun,—its more humble halls; and El-Uksur might be surveyed, by that time, as a fitting site for a temple to answer to El-Karnac, but the El-Kurneh temple and the Ramaséum were not conceived of; for the sovereigns who built them were not born. The Memnon statues were yet in the quarry. The Pyramids were, it is now thought, about two thousand years old: and about this time Moses was watching the erection of the great obelisk (which we call Cleopatra's Needle) at Heliopolis, where he studied. If learned men are right in saying that the Philistines* were of the race expelled from Thebes, they had, by the time this temple was built, settled themselves under the Lebanon and along the southern Syrian coasts, whence they were to be driven out when Moses should be in his grave. If, as some poets tell, Egyptus and Cadmus were among the Shepherd intruders driven out from the Thebaid, the fifty nieces of the one had by this time murdered his sons, their husbands, and the dragon's teeth of the other had sprung up into armed men. It is worth while to mention

* Herodotus tells us (II. 128) that the Egyptians so hated the Pharaohs who built the two largest pyramids that they would not pronounce their names; but called those edifices "by the name of the shepherd Philitis, who in those times led his flocks to pasture in their neighbourhood." Is the slyness of this notice attributable to the priests or the prudential historian?

such fables as these last under their assigned dates; because we learn thereby to value as we ought the tangible and reliable records we meet in the Egyptian monuments, in contrast with the dim traditions of later born nations. We may also gather useful hints on the history and philosophy of art and science, from the mythi and the monuments together. There is writing on this temple: there is writing on the much-older Pyramids: and it was only at the time of the erection of this temple that letters were carried into Greece. Here is a pillar which is believed to have suggested, in a subsequent age, the Doric column; the oldest of Greek pillars. Here it stands, remarkable for its many-sided form. It was to us now the oldest we had ever seen: but we afterwards saw some, more precisely what is called Doric, in the tombs of Benee Hasan. The columns of this temple are little more than bases. They are nearly all of the same height: some like mere heaps of stone; others bearing uninjured inscriptions. They are small remains: but long may they last! They are the ultimate record of their kind on the ordinary route of Nile travellers, and usually the first subject to their examination.

Our ride to the rock of Abooseer occupied an hour and a half. Thanks to the cool north wind, we highly enjoyed it. Our way lay through a complete desert, over sand hills, and among stony tracts, where scarcely a trace of vegetation is to be seen. In such places the coloquintus is a welcome object, with its thick, milky leaves and stalks, and its velvet blossom. The creeping, thorny coloquintida, too, with its bitter apples, is a handsome plant: or it looked so to us, in the absence of others.

Here and there amidst the dreary expanse, or half hidden in some sandy dell, lay the bleached skeleton of a camel. The only living things seen were a brood of partridges and a jerboa,—a graceful and most agile little creature, whose long extended tail, with its tufted end, gave it a most distinctive appearance. Some of our people started off in pursuit, and would not give up for a long time, making extreme efforts to keep the little creature in view, and drive it in one another's way; but it baffled them at last, and got back to its hole.

We rode to the foot of the rock of Abooseer, and then ascended it,—in rather heavy spirits, knowing that this was to be our last look southwards. The summit was breezy and charming. I looked down the precipice on which I stood, and saw a sheer descent to the Nile of two hundred feet. The waters were gushing past the foot of this almost perpendicular crag: and from holes in its strata flew out flocks of pigeons, blue in the sunshine. The scene all round under that wide heaven was wild beyond description. There was no moving creature visible but ourselves and the pigeons; and no trace of human habitation but the ruins of two mud huts, and of a white building on the Arabian shore. The whole scene was composed of desert, river, and black basaltic rocks. Round to the north, from the south-west, there is actually nothing to be seen but blackish, sand-streaked rocks near at hand, and sandy desert further off. To the north-east, the river winds away, blue and full, between sands. Two white sails were on it at the moment. From the river, a level sand extended to the soft tinted Arabian hills, whose varied forms and broken lights and shadows were on the

horizon nearly from the north round to the south-east. These level sands then give place to a black rugged surface, which extends to where two summits,—to-day of a bright amethyst hue,—close the circuit of vision. These summits are at a considerable distance on the way to Dongola. The river is hidden among the black rocks to the south, and its course is not traceable till it peeps out, blue and bright, in two or three places, and hides itself again among the islets. It makes a great bend while thus hidden, and reappears much more to the east. It has now reached the part properly called the Second Cataract; and it comes sweeping down towards the rock on which we stood, dashing and driving among its thousand islets, and then gathering its thousand currents into one, to proceed calmly on its course. Its waters were turbid in the rapids, and looked as muddy where they poured down from shelf or boulder as in the Delta itself: but in all its calm reaches it reflected the sky in a blue so deep as it would not do to paint. The islets were of fantastic forms,—worn by the cataracts of ages: but still, the outlines were angular, and the black ledges were graduated by the action of the waters, as if they had been soft sand. On one or two islands I saw what I at first took for millet-patches: but they were only coarse grass and reeds. A sombre brownish tamarisk, or dwarfed mimosa, put up its melancholy head here and there; and this was all the vegetation apparent within that wide horizon.—I doubt whether a more striking scene than this, to English eyes, can be anywhere found. It is thoroughly African, thoroughly tropical, very beautiful, —most majestic, and most desolate. Something of the

impression might be owing to the circumstances of leave-taking under which we looked abroad from our station: but still, if I saw this scene in an unknown land in a dream, I am sure I should be powerfully moved by it. This day, it certainly interested me more than the First Cataract.

I was tempted by the invitation of a sort of cairn on the top of a hill not far inland, to go there; and thence I obtained another glimpse of the Lybian Desert, and saw two more purple peaks rising westwards, soft and clear.

There is a host of names carved on the accessible side of Abooseer. We looked with interest on Belzoni's and some few others. We cut ours with a nail and hammer. Here, and here only, I left my name. On this wild rock, and at the limit of our range of travel, it seemed, not only natural, but right to some who may come after us. Our names will not be found in any temple or tomb. If we ever do such a thing, may our names be publicly held up to shame, as I am disposed to publish those of the carvers and scribblers who have forfeited their right to privacy by inscribing their names where they can never be effaced!

The time arrived when we must go. It was with a heavy heart that I quitted the rock, turned my back on the south, and rode away.

We found our boat prepared in the usual manner for the descent of the river;—the mainmast removed, and laid along overhead, to support the awning; the kitchen shifted and turned; and the planks of the decks taken up to form seats for the rowers, so as sadly to restrict our small space.—One of our dishes at dinner was an excellent omelette, made of part of the contents of an

ostrich's egg. Two of these eggs were bought for six piastres (1*s.* 2*d.*). The contents were obtained by boring a hole with a gimlet. The contents of this egg were found to be equal to twenty-nine of the small hen's eggs of this part of the country.

We began our return voyage about 6 P. M., floating, sometimes broadside down, and sometimes in towards the bank, when it became the business of the rowers to bring us out again into the middle of the stream. The wind was hostile, cold, and strong enough to be incessantly shoving us aside. Our progress was very slow. The first night we moored at six miles only from Wadee Halfa.

The next evening (January 6th) we were within half an hour of Aboo-Simbil when duty ordered me to my cabin. When I left the deck, the moon had risen, the rocks were closing in, and the river was like a placid lake.

In the morning we were to enter upon a new kind of life, as travellers. We were to begin our course of study of the Monuments.

CHAPTER IX.

HISTORICAL SKETCH, FROM MENES TO THE ROMAN OCCUPATION OF EGYPT.

BEFORE entering upon the study of the Monuments, it seems necessary to obtain something like an orderly view of the state of the country before and during their erection. At best, our conceptions must be obscure enough; but we can form none unless we arrange in our minds what we know of the history of Egypt, of which these monuments are at once the chief evidence and the eternal illustration.

The early history of Egypt differs from that of every other explored country in the nature of its records. Elsewhere, we derive all our knowledge from popular legends, which embody the main ideas to be preserved in forms which are not, and were never meant to be historically true. It is the business of the philosophical historian to separate the true ideas from their environment of fiction, and to mark the time when the narrative, from being mythical becomes historically true;—to classify the two orders of ancient historians,—both inestimable in their way,—the Poets who perpetuate national Ideas, and the Historians who perpetuate national Facts.—With regard to Egypt, we are in possession of as much of this early material as any

nation has furnished; and we have the monuments besides.

These monuments consist of buildings or excavations, —of the sculptures upon them,—and of their inscriptions. From the edifices or caves we may learn much of the condition, mind, and manners of the people who wrought them, and, if their dates can be obtained, in historical order.—From their sculptures we may learn much of the personages, divine and human, about whom they thought most; and their inscriptions are of inestimable use in identifying these personages, and in declaring their dates. Being thus in possession of mythical legends, of the writings of historians, and of edifices and excavations covered with sculptures and inscriptions, we are as well supplied with records of the early history of Egypt as we can probably ever be with regard to any ancient people; and better than we yet are with regard to any other of the nations of the old world.

The legends relating to ancient Egypt are preserved in the works of its historians. It is the business of modern inquirers to separate them from the true historical material, and to extract from them, where possible, the essential Ideas which they embody.

The chief historians of Egypt are Hecatæus of Miletus, who was at Thebes about half a century before Herodotus, and some fragments of whose writings have come down to us:—Herodotus, from whom we learn more than from any other:—the writer of the book of Genesis:—Hecatæus of Abdera, from whose narrative extracts may be found in the works of Diodorus Siculus: —Manetho, an Egyptian, of whom also we have only extracts in other authors; but who supplies very valu-

able. information: — Eratosthenes of Cyrene, whose writings are at once illustrative of those of Manetho and a check upon them: Diodorus Siculus, who travelled in Egypt and wrote a history of it, rather more than half a century before the Christian era: Strabo, who has left us a full account of what he saw in Egypt, between Alexandria and the First Cataract:—and Abd-allatif, an Arabian physician, who supplies a valuable report of the state of the Nile Valley and its people when he visited them in the twelfth century.—It is the business of modern inquirers to separate what these historians derived from the depositories of the national mythi from what they personally observed: to compare their works with one another, and to apply them as a key (where this can be done), to the monumental records.

As to the use of the monumental records, several precautions are necessary. Modern inquirers must beware of interpreting what they see by their own favourite ideas,—as travellers do who contrive to see Hebrew groups among the Egyptian sculptures:—they must diligently and patiently work out the knowledge of the ancient language and its signs, and beware of straining the little they know of these, to accommodate any historical theory they may carry in their minds:—and they must remember that the edifice and its sculptures are not always of the same date, and that therefore what is true of the one is not necessarily true of the other.

Without going into any detail (which would fill a volume if entered upon at all) about the respective values of these authorities, and their agreements and

conflicts, I may give a slight sketch of what competent modern inquirers believe we have learned from them.

For our first glimpse into ancient Egyptian life we must go back upon the track of Time far further than we have been accustomed to suppose that track to extend. People who had believed all their lives that the globe and Man were created together were startled when the new science of geology revealed to them the great fact that Man is a comparatively new creation on the earth, whose oceans and swamps and jungles were aforetime inhabited by monsters never seen by human eye but in their fossil remains. People who enter Egypt with the belief that the human race has existed only six thousand years, and that at that date, the world was uninhabited by men, except within a small circuit in Asia, must undergo a somewhat similar revolution of ideas. All new research operates to remove further back the date of the formation of the Egyptian empire. The differences between the dates given by legendary records and by modern research (with the help of contemporary history) are very great: but the one agrees as little as the other with the popular notion that the human race is only six thousand years old.

When Hecatæus of Miletus was at Thebes, about 500 B.C., he spoke, as Herodotus tells us,* to the priests of Amun, of his genealogy, declaring himself to be the sixteenth in descent from a god. Upon this, the priests conducted him into a great building of the temple, where they pointed out to him (as afterwards to Herodotus) the statues of their high priests. Each

* Herod. II. 143.

high priest placed a colossal wooden statue of himself in this place during his life; and each was the son of his predecessor. The priests would not admit that any of these was the son of a god. From first to last they were of human origin; and here, in direct lineal succession, were 345. Taking the average length of human life, how many thousand years would be occupied by the succession of 345 high priests, in a direct line from father to son! According to the priests, it was nearly 5000 years from the time of Horus. They further informed Herodotus that gods did reign in Egypt before they deputed their power to mortals.* They spoke of eight gods who reigned first,—among whom was one answering to Pan of the Greeks: then came twelve of another series: and again, twelve more, the offspring of the second series: and of these Osiris was one; and it was not till after the reign of his son Horus that the first of these 345 high priests came into power. From Osiris to king Amasis, the priests reckoned 15,000 years, declaring that they had exact registers of the successive lives which had filled up the time.† — Such is the legendary history, as it existed 500 years before Christ. We can gather from it thus much,—that the priests then looked back upon a long reach of time, and believed the art of registering to be of an old date.

Here we have the earliest report of dates offered us. According to the latest researches,‡ we cannot place the formation of the Egyptian empire under Menes, nearer to us than 5500 years ago. And the Egyptians

* Herod. II. 144, 146. † Herod. II. 145.
‡ Bunsen. "Egypt's Place in the World's History."

were then a civilised people, subject to legislation and executive authority, pursuing trade, and capable of the arts. A longer or shorter series of centuries must be allotted for bringing them up to this state, according to the views of the students of social life: but the shortest must bring us back to the current date of the creation of man. How these five or six thousand years are filled up, we may see hereafter.

Leaving it to my readers to fix for themselves the point of time for our survey of the most ancient period of Egyptian history, I may be permitted to appoint the place.—Let us take our stand above the Second Cataract;—on the rock of Abooseer, perhaps, where I could only look over southwards, and not go and learn. This is a good station, because it is a sort of barrier between two chains of monuments: a frontier resting-place, whence one may survey the area of ancient Egyptian civilisation from end to end.

Looking down the river, northwards, beyond the Nubian region (then Ethiopia) beyond the First Cataract, and far away over the great marsh which occupied the Nile valley, we see, coming out of the darkness of oblivion, Menes, the first Egyptian king, turning the river from its course under the Lybian mountain into a new bed, in the middle of the valley.* Thus the priests of Thebes told Herodotus; saying that Menes made the dykes, by which the land was reclaimed, on which Memphis afterwards stood. It must strike every one that this period, 5500 years ago, must have been one of an advanced civilisation; such a work as this embankment requiring scientific ideas and

* Herod. II. 99.

methods, apt tools, and trained men. The priests ascribed to this same king the building of Memphis, and of the great temple of Phthah (answering to Vulcan) in that city. They read to Herodotus a long list of sovereigns (three hundred and thirty) who succeeded Menes; of whom one was an Egyptian woman, and eighteen were Ethiopian kings.* That there should have been a temple of Phthah implies the establishment of a priesthood. That a woman should have occupied the throne, seems to imply the establishment of a principle of hereditary succession: or at least, it tells of the subordination, in this early age, of force to authority. That there should have been Ethiopian sovereigns among the Egyptian implies a relation between the two countries, whether of warfare or commerce.—During all this time, the plain of Thebes lay bare.

The next sovereignty that was established in the valley was at This, about sixty miles below Thebes. A succession of monarchs reigned here,—some say sixteen, some more,—while the plain of Thebes still lay bare.

While these sovereigns were reigning at This, and before Thebes was heard of, the kings of Memphis were building the Pyramids of Geezeh. It is certain that the builders of these pyramids were learned men. How much science is requisite for the erection of such edifices need hardly be pointed out;—the mathematical skill and accuracy; the astronomical science shown in the placing of them true to the cardinal points; the command of mechanical powers which are at this day

* Herod. II. 100.

unknown to us; and the arts of writing and decoration shown in the inscriptions which covered their outside in the days of Herodotus,* though the casing which contained them is now destroyed. In the neighbouring tombs, however, we have evidence, as will be shown hereafter, of the state of some of the arts at that date: and I may mention here that the sign of the inkstand and reed pen are among the representations in the tombs. There is no doubt as to who built the Pyramids. Colonel Howard Vyse found the kings' names inscribed in them. When the Pyramids were built, it was a thousand years before Abraham was born, and the plain of Thebes still lay bare.

Now we must turn southwards, and look over as far as Dongola. For a long way above the Second Cataract, there are no monuments. This is probably owing to the river not being navigable there, so that there were no trading stations. There are obvious reasons why temples and other monuments should rise where commerce halts, where men congregate, and desire protection of person and property, and exercise their social passions and affections. So, for the twenty-five days' journey where the river is impracticable, there are no monuments. Then some occur of a rather modern date: and far beyond them, —up in Dongola,—we come upon traces of a time when men were trafficking, building and worshipping, while yet the plain of Thebes lay bare. To this point did the sovereigns of Memphis and of This extend their hand of power; erecting statues as memorials

* Herod. II. 125.

of themselves, and by their subjects, trading in such articles of use and luxury as they derived from the east. While the Ethiopian subjects of these early Pharaohs were building up that character for piety and probity which spread over the world, and found its way into the earliest legends and poems of distant nations, the plain of Thebes still lay wild and bare;—not one stone yet placed upon another.

And now, the time had arrived for the Theban kings to arise, give glory to the close of the Old Monarchy, and preserve the national name and existence during the thousand years of foreign domination which were to follow. In the course of reigns at which we have now arrived, El-Karnac began to show its massive buildings, and the plain of Thebes to present temptation to a foreign conqueror.

We have now arrived at the end of the First great Period of ascertained Egyptian history;—a period supposed, from astronomical calculation and critical research, to comprehend 889 years.—A dark and humiliating season was now drawing on.

Considering the great wealth and power of the kings now reigning at Memphis and at Thebes, we are obliged to form a high opinion of the strength of the Shepherd Race who presently subdued Egypt. Whence they came; no one seems to know,—further than that it was somewhere from the East. Whether they were Assyrians, as some have conjectured, or the Phœnicians who were encroaching upon the Delta at a subsequent time, or some third party, we cannot learn, the Egyptians having always, as is natural, kept silence about them. The pride of the

Egyptians was in their agriculture and commerce; and to be conquered by a pastoral people, whose business lay anywhere among the plains of the earth, rather than in the richly-tilled, narrow valley of the Nile, was a hard stroke of adversity for them. So, in their silence, all that we know of their strong enemy is that the Shepherd Race took Memphis, put garrisons in all the strong places of Egypt, made the kings of Memphis and Thebes tributary to them, and held their empire for 929 years: that is, for a time equal to that which extends from the death of our King Alfred to our own; a long season of subjugation, from which it is wonderful that the native Egyptian race should have revived. This dark season, during which the native kings were not absolutely dethroned, but depressed and made tributary, is commonly called the Middle Monarchy. It is supposed to extend from B.C. 2754 to B.C. 1825.

About this time, a visitor arrived in Egypt, and remained a short while, whose travels are interesting to us, and whose appearance affords a welcome rest to the imagination, after its wanderings in the dim regions of these old ages. The richest of the Phœnicians who found themselves restricted for room and pasturage by the numbers of Chaldeans who moved westwards into Syria, found their way, through Arabia, to the abundance of corn which Lower Egypt afforded. Among these was Abraham, a man of such wealth and distinction that he and his followers were entertained as guests at Memphis, and his wife was lodged in the palace of the king. He must have looked up at the Pyramids, and learned some of the particulars which we, following on his traces, long in vain to know:—how

they were reared, and for what purpose precisely; and perhaps many details of the progress of the work. It is true, these pyramids had then stood somewhere about 1500 years: the builders, tens of thousands in number, had slept for many centuries in their graves; the kings who had reared them lay embalmed in the stillness of ages, and the glory of a supremacy which had passed away; and these edifices had become so familiar to the eyes of the inhabitants, that they were like natural features of the landscape: but as Abraham walked round those vast bases, and looked up at the smooth pictured surfaces of their sides, he might have had explained to him those secrets of ancient civilisation which we seek to pry into in vain.

We now come to the brilliant Third Period.

The Theban kings had been growing in strength for some time; and at length they were able to rise up against the Shepherd Race, and expel them from Memphis, and afterwards from their stronghold, Abaris. On the surrender of this last place, the enemy were permitted to march out of the country in safety,—the number of their men being recorded as 240,000.—The period of 1300 years now entered upon was the grandest of Egyptian history,—if, we may add, the Sesostris of old renown was, as some recent students have supposed, the Ramases II. of this Period. Some high authorities, as Lepsius and Bunsen, believe Sesostris to have belonged to the old Monarchy. However this may be, all agree that the deeds of many heroes are attributed to the one who now bears the name of Sesostris; and the achievements of Ramases the Great are quite enough to glorify his age, whether he had a

predecessor like himself or not. Of these achievements I shall say nothing here, as they will come before us quite often enough in our study of the temples. Suffice it that the empire of Egypt was extended by conquest southwards to Abyssinia; westwards over Lybia; northwards over Greece; and eastwards beyond the banks of the Ganges. The rock statues and stelæ of Sesostris may yet be seen in countries far apart, but within this range: his Babylonian captives were employed on some of the great edifices we have seen, and were afterwards permitted to build a city for themselves near the point of the Delta: and the tributary kings and chiefs of all the conquered countries were required to come up to Egypt once a year, to pay homage by drawing the conqueror's chariot, in return for which they received gifts and favour. The kings of Lower Egypt appear to have declined about this period; if even they were not tributary to those of Upper Egypt. Of these kings, one was he who received Joseph into favour,* and made him his prime minister; and another was he who afterwards "knew not Joseph." Of Joseph's administration of the affairs of Lower Egypt we know more than of the rule of any other minister of the Pharaohs. I have walked upon the mounds which cover the streets of Memphis, through which Joseph rode, on occasion of his investiture, and where the king's servants ran before him, to bid the people bow the knee. And when at Heliopolis, I was on the spot where he married his wife,—the daughter of the priest and governor of On, afterwards Heliopolis.

* Supposed about B.C. 1706.

It was in the early part of this Third Period of the Egyptian Monarchy that Cecrops is supposed (fable being here mingled with history) to have led a colony from Saïs, and to have founded the kingdom of Athens,* beginning here the long series of obligations that Greece, and through Greece Rome and the world, have been under to Egypt. It is almost overpowering to the imagination to contemplate the vast antiquity of the Egyptian empire, already above two thousand years, in the day when Cecrops was training his band of followers, to lead them in search of a place whereon to build Athens;—in a day long preceding that when Ceres was wandering about the earth in search of her daughter.

It was about this time that a still more important event than even the founding of Athens had taken place. We all know how a certain Egyptian lady went out one day to bathe, and what was found by her maidens in a rushy spot on the banks of the Nile. That lady was the daughter of one of the Pharaohs of Memphis, at a time, (as some think) shortly before the union on one head of the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt. When she brought home the child found among the rushes, she little thought that that infant head was to become the organ of a wisdom that should eclipse the glory of Sesostris, and mainly determine the spiritual destinies of the human race, for a longer course of centuries than even Egypt had yet seen.

When the Shepherd Kings and their army were driven out of Egypt, many of their people remained as slaves, and were employed on the public works. The

* B.C. 1556.

Hebrews were also thus employed;—latterly on the fortifications of Thoum and Heliopolis; and the Egyptians confounded the two races of aliens in a common hatred. From the prevalence of leprosy among the Hebrews, and other causes, they were considered an unclean people; and they were sent by the Pharaoh of their day, under the warning of the priests, to live by themselves in the district allotted to them. Whether the Pharaoh who opposed the departure of this army of slaves was Thothmes III., or his son, Amunoph II., or some later king, is undetermined; but it is believed on high authority that it was Thothmes III.,* and that he reigned many years after the Exodus. The date of the Exodus is agreed upon as about B. C. 1491, whoever was the Pharaoh reigning at the time. There is no assertion in the Mosaic narrative, that Pharaoh himself was lost in the Red Sea,† nor that the whole of his host perished: nor is there any allusion in the Song of Moses to the death of the sovereign: and some of the Hebrew traditions declare‡ that Pharaoh survived, and extended his conquests afterwards into Assyria. Thus the supposition that the Israelites marched out in an early year of the reign of this monarch is not irreconcileable with his having reigned thirty-nine years, as Egyptian history declares that he did. Manetho mentions their numbers to have been eighty thousand when they were sent to live by themselves: and it is curious on this account, and on some others, to find the number assigned by the Mosaic history so high as

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, I. p. 54.
† Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, I. p. 55.
‡ Pictorial History of Palestine, I. p. 186.

six hundred thousand, besides women and children. Even if we suppose a proportion of these to have been their fellow-slaves of the Shepherd Race, who, being confounded with the Hebrews by their masters, took this opportunity of leaving the country, it gives us a high idea of the power and population of Egypt in those days that such a body could be abstracted from the working class of the country, and leave behind a sufficient force for the achievement of such wars and arts as we know were prosecuted after their departure.*

As our chief interest in Egypt was till lately from its being the scene of the early life of the Hebrew nation, we are apt to look for records of the Hebrews on the monuments wherever we go. I am convinced that none have been found relating to their connexion with Egypt:—none relating to them at all, till the long subsequent time when Jerusalem was conquered by Sheshonk (Shishak). In my opinion, it would be more surprising if there had been such records than that there are not. There is nothing in the presence of a body of slaves to require or suggest a monumental record, unless those slaves were made so by conquest, and had previously been a nation. The Hebrews were not a nation, and had no dream of being so till Moses began the mighty work of making them one. When they had a confirmed national existence; when their

* It is probable that no one will contend for the accuracy of the numbers as they stand in the Mosaic history; for, taking the longest term assigned for the residence of the Hebrews in Egypt,—430 years,—and supposing the most rapid rate of increase known in the world, their numbers could not have amounted to one-third of that assigned.

great King Solomon had married into the line of the Pharaohs, and their national interests came into collision with those of Egypt, we find them, among other nations, in the train of the captives of Sheshonk, on the walls of El Karnac. Some Hebrew names among those of the Egyptian months,* and a sprinkling of Hebrew words in the Coptic language (which might have found their way there afterwards) are, I believe, the only traceable memorials in Egypt of the residence of the Israelites.

According to Pliny, one of the Ramases was on the throne of Egypt when Troy was taken: and within thirty years of that time, King Solomon married a daughter of one of the Pharaohs.—How great Thebes had long been is clear from the mention of Upper Egypt in Homer, who says, perhaps truly enough in one sense, that it was the birthplace of some of the Greek gods; and that its inhabitants were so wise as to be favourites, and even hosts of those gods. It was with these wise Thebans (then one with the Ethiopians) that Jupiter and his family were supposed by the Greeks to be making holiday, when out of reach, as it seemed, of the prayers of the besiegers of Troy.—The Theban family of monarchs, however, was by this time declining in power; and after a century or two of weakness, they were displaced by stronger men from a higher station up the river; and Egypt was governed by princes from the hitherto subordinate province of Ethiopia. In three generations, Thebes ceased to be the capital of Egypt; and the seat of government was removed to Saïs in the Delta. This event happened

* Sharpe's History of Egypt, p. 37.

nearly 700 years B. C. From this time, we have the advantage of certainty of dates, within, at least, the range of a few months. We have come down to the record of Babylonian eclipses, and the skies light up the history of the earth.

It was in this age that the downfal of old Egypt was provided for by the introduction of Greek influences into the Delta, at the time when the seat of sovereignty was there. While the national throne stood at Thebes, the religion, philosophy, learning and language of the ancient race could be little, if at all, affected by what was doing in other parts of the world: but when the Thebaid became a province, and the metropolis was open to visits from the voyagers of the Mediterranean, the exclusively Egyptian character began to give way; and while Egypt furnished, through these foreigners, the religion, philosophy, and art of the whole civilised world, she was beginning to lose the nationality which was her strength. Nechepsus, one of the kings of Saïs, was a learned priest, and wrote on astronomy. His writings were in the Greek language. The kings of Saïs now began to employ Greek mercenaries. Psammitichus I. not only employed as soldiers large numbers of Ionian and Carian immigrants, but, as Herodotus tells us,* committed to them the children of the Egyptians, to be taught Greek, and gave them lands and other advantages for settlement in the Delta. Of course, this was displeasing to his native subjects, and the national unity was destroyed. One curious circumstance occurred under this king, which reveals

* Herod. II. 154.

much of the popular temper, and which has left some remarkable traces behind it,—as will be seen in my next chapter. Psammitichus placed three armies of Egyptians on the three frontiers of Egypt.* That on the southern frontier, stationed at Elephantine, grew impatient, after a neglect of three years. Finding their petitions for removal unanswered, and their pay not forthcoming, they resolved to emigrate, and away they marched, up the river, as far beyond Meroë as Meroë is beyond Elephantine,—and there lands were given them, where their descendants were found, three centuries afterwards. The king himself pursued and overtook them, and endeavoured by promises and prayers, and by appeals to them not to forsake their gods and their homes, to induce them to return. They told him however that they would make homes for themselves, and marched on. Their numbers being, as Herodotus tells, two hundred and forty thousand men, it was impossible to constrain them. The king took with him a force of Greek mercenaries, whom he sent some way, as we shall see by and by, after the deserters; but it appears that he did not go higher than Elephantine.

While we thus see how Egypt became weakened in preparation for downfal, it is pretty clear, on the other hand, how the process went on by which the rest of the world became enlightened by her knowledge, and ripened by her wisdom.

About thirty years after Saïs became the capital of Egypt, the first of the Wise Men of Greece, Thales, was

* Herod. II. 30.

born. He went to Egypt to improve his knowledge,—and remarkable indeed was the knowledge he brought away.—He was the first Greek who predicted an eclipse. He forewarned his Ionian countrymen of that celebrated eclipse which, when it happened, suspended the battle between the Medes and Lydians.—It was Thales, we are told, who, after his return from Egypt, fixed the sun's orbit, or determined the duration of the year to be 365 days. It was in Egypt that he obtained his knowledge of Geometry: and he it was who imparted, on his return, the great discovery that the angle in a semicircle is always a right angle. In Egypt he ascertained the elevation of the pyramids by observing the shadows of measurable objects in relation to their height. His connexion with Egypt gives us a new interest in his theories of creation or existence. He gave the name of Life to every active principle, as we should call it; and in this sense, naturally declared that the universe was "full of gods." At the same time, he is reported by tradition to have said, "The most ancient of things existing is God; for he is uncreated: the most beautiful thing is the universe, for it is God's creation." Men in Greece wondered at him for saying what would not surprise even the common men in Egypt in his day, that Death does not differ from Life.

About the same time came a sober thinking man from Greece to Egypt, to exchange a cargo of olive-oil from Athens for Egyptian corn and luxuries from the East. After this thoughtful man had done his commercial business, he remained to see what he could of the country and people. He conversed much with a

company of priests at Saïs, who taught him, as Plato tells us, much history, and some geography, and evidently not a little of law. His countrymen profited on his return by his studies at Saïs; for this oil-merchant was Solon the Law-Maker. One of his laws is assigned immediately to an Egyptian origin; that by which every man was required to give an account to the magistrate of his means of livelihood. As for the geography which Solon might learn at Saïs, there is the testimony of Herodotus that King Necho, the predecessor of Psammitichus I., sent a maritime expedition by the Red Sea, which circumnavigated Africa, and returned by the Pillars of Hercules.* Plato tells us † that one of Solon's priestly friends, Sonchis, told him of some Atlantic isles, beyond the Pillars of Hercules, which were larger than Asia and Africa united. This sets one thinking whether the Egyptians had not some notion of the existence of America.

Within seventy years or so of Solon's visit to Egypt, a truly great man followed on his traces. Pythagoras was unsatisfied with all that could be learned from teachers at home,—from Thales downwards,—and went to Egypt to study philosophy and morals. He was introduced to king Amasis at Saïs by letters from Polycrates. There is no saying how much of the philosophy of Pythagoras is derived and how much original: nor, of that which is derived, how much he owed to intercourse with the sages of Chaldæa and

* Herod. IV. 42. A strong indication of the truth of this story is found in the simple remark of Herodotus that he cannot believe the navigators in one of their assertions,—that they had the sun on their right hand.

† In Critias.

other countries. But I think no one who has felt an interest in the study of what is known of the Pythagorean philosophy, can fail to be reminded of the philosopher at every step in those chambers of the tombs at Thebes which relate to Life and Death subjects. Where the paintings treat of the constitution of things, the regions which the soul of Man may inhabit, and the states through which it may pass, one feels that Pythagoras might have been the designer of them, if he were not a learner from them. I strongly suspect it would be found, if the truth could be known, that more of the spiritual religion, the abstruse philosophy, and the lofty ethics and political views of the old Egyptians have found their way into the general mind of our race through Pythagoras than by any or all other channels, except perhaps the institutions of Moses, and the speculations of Plato. Some traditions, among the many which exist in relation to this, the first man who assumed the title of Philosopher, report him to have lived twenty years in the Nile valley; and then to have been carried off prisoner to Babylon, on the Persian invasion of Egypt.

This brings us near to the close of the great Third Period of Egyptian history. Before the Persians came, however, Hecatæus of Miletus, mentioned before as the earliest historical authority, went up to Thebes. I have spoken already of what he saw and heard there.

Cyrus was meanwhile meditating a renewal of the old wars between Babylon and Egypt, which had formerly been all to the glory of the Pharaohs. Before his death, Cyrus took Cyprus from the Egyptians: and he bequeathed the task of conquering Egypt itself to

his son Cambyses. — The wise and fortunate king Amasis died before Cambyses reached Egypt: and with him, the Third Period of Egyptian history may be said to have expired; for his son Psammenitus could make so little resistance, that he had completed his surrender to the foolish and cruel conqueror before he had been on the throne six months.

We have now reached the mournful close of the great Third Period of Egyptian history; and there is little to dwell on in the succeeding two hundred years, when Egypt was a province of Persia. Upper Egypt never rose again. If there had been any strength or spirit left in her, she might have driven out Cambyses; for his folly left him open to almost any kind or degree of resistance from man or nature. Nature did her utmost to avenge the conquered people: but they could not help themselves. Cambyses set out for Ethiopia with his Persians, leaving his Greek troops to defend the Delta: but he made no provision for his long march southwards; and his soldiers, after exhausting the country, and killing their beasts of burden for food, began to slay one another, casting lots for one victim in ten of their number.* The army of fifty thousand men, whom he had raised in the valley, in order to conquer the Desert,—that is, to take the Oases, and burn the temple of the Oracle,—were never heard of more. Whether they perished by thirst, or were overtaken by the sand, was never known. So, all that the conqueror could do was to lay waste Thebes, where it appears there was now no one to stay his hand. He

* Herod. III. 25.

carried off its treasures of gold, silver and ivory, broke open and robbed the Tombs of the Kings, threw down what he could of the temple buildings, and hewed in pieces such of the colossal statues as were not too strong for the brute force of his army. It was then, if Pausanias says true, that the Vocal statue, the eastern-most of the Pair, was shattered and overthrown from the waist: after which, however, it still gave out its gentle music to the morning sun. On the return of Cambyses to Memphis,* he found the people rejoicing in the investiture of a new bull Apis, which had been found qualified to succeed the one which had died. He was angry at any rejoicing while he was baffled and unfortunate; asked how it was that they showed no joy when he was there before, and so much now when he had lost the chief part of his army; put to death the magistrates who informed him of the occasion of the festival; with his own hand stabbed the bull, and ordered the priests to be scourged.† Here again he broke open the tombs, and desecrated the temples. Meantime, the valley swarmed with strangers, who came in embassy from every part of the wide Persian dominion, to offer congratulation and magnificent presents, on the conquest of Egypt.—Yet this new province never became an easy possession. One revolt followed another; and the valley was a scene of almost continual conflict during the two hundred years of its nominal subservience to Persia. Its conquest by Cambyses took place in 525 B.C.

It was only during an occasional revolt that any one

* Herod. III. 27. † Herod. III. 29.

from Athens could set foot in Egypt: for the great war between the Greeks and Persians was now going on. Anaxagoras was born 500 B.C., and he was therefore ten years old at the time of the battle of Marathon; and nineteen when that of Salamis was fought. But when he was forty years of age, Egypt became accessible for four years, by means of a revolt. During this time, though the Persians were never dislodged from Memphis, both Lower and Upper Egypt appeared to have become independent; and many Greeks, bent on the advancement of learning, and Anaxagoras among them, hastened to the Egyptian schools. Anaxagoras's work on the Nile has perished with his other writings: and there is no saying how much of his philosophy he derived from the teachings of the Egyptian priests: but there is a striking accordance between the opinions which he is variously reported to have held, and for which he is believed to have suffered banishment, and those which constituted part of the philosophy of Egypt. Wherever we turn, in tracing the course of ancient philosophy, we meet the priests of Egypt: and it really appears as if the great men of Greece and other countries had little to say on the highest and deepest subjects of human inquiry till they had studied at Memphis, or Saïs, or Thebes or Heliopolis. Here was the master of Socrates,* the originator of some of his most important opinions, and the great mover of his mind, studying in Egypt; and we shall hereafter

* Proclus says that Socrates, as well as Plato, learned the doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul from the Egyptians. If so, his great master, Anaxagoras, was probably,—almost certainly,—the channel through which he received it.

find the great pupil of Socrates, and the interpreter of his mind, Plato, dwelling in the same school, for so long a time, it is thought, as to show in what reverence he held it.

Soon after Anaxagoras came Herodotus. We may be thankful that among the Greeks who visited Egypt, there was one whose taste was more for matter-of-fact than for those high abstract inquiries which are not popularly included under that name: for the scientific and philosophical writings of his countrymen are, for the most part, lost, while the travels of Herodotus remain, as lively and fresh in their interest as ever. We may mourn that the others are gone; but we must rejoice that these are preserved. Here, at least, we obtain what we have longed for in the whole course of our study of the early Egyptian periods; records of the sayings and doings of the priests, and of the destinies of the people; pictures of the appearance of the great Valley and of its inhabitants; and details of their lives, customs, manners, history and opinions. The temptation is strong to present again here, to fill up and illuminate this sketch of the history of old Egypt, some of the material of Herodotus: but his books lie within reach of every hand: and I will use them no further than is necessary to the illustration of what I myself observed in my study of the Monuments.

Within a hundred years of Herodotus came Plato. It may be questioned whether this visit of Plato to Egypt be not one of the most important events which have occurred in the history of the human mind.—The first thing that strikes us is how much there must have been to be learned in Egypt at this time, since Plato,

his friend Eudoxus the astronomer, and Chrysippus the physician, all came—(such men, and from such a distance!) to study in the schools of Heliopolis. It is related, and was believed in his own age, that Plato lived thirteen years at Heliopolis: and when Strabo was there, 350 years afterwards, he was shown the house where Plato and Eudoxus lived and studied.—Plato had met Socrates, it is believed, at the age of nineteen. After having learned what he could of him, and sustained his death, and been compelled for political reasons to leave Athens, he had gone to Megara, and joined the school of Euclid,*—also a pupil of Socrates, and one well qualified to cherish what Socrates had sown in the mind of Plato. Though this school was considered one of doubt and denial, its ultimate doctrine was that the Supreme Good is always the same and unchangeable. Thus trained and set thinking, Plato came to Egypt, and sat where Moses had sat, at the feet of the priests, gaining, as Moses had gained, an immortal wisdom from their lips. The methods of learning of these two men, and their acquisitions differed according to the differing characteristics of their minds. Each took from his teachers what he could best appropriate. Moses was spiritualised to a wonderful degree, considering his position and race; but his surpassing eminence was as a redeeming legislator. Plato had deeply-considered views on political matters; but his surpassing eminence was as a spiritual philosopher. Moses redeemed a race of slaves, made men of them, organised them into a society, and constituted them a nation; while Plato did only theoretical work

* Not the geometrician.

of that kind,—enough to testify to the political philosophy of Egypt, but not to affect the condition of Greece. But Plato taught the Egyptian doctrine (illustrated on the tombs ages before, and, as Proclus declares, derived by Plato from Egypt) of the Immortality of the Soul, and rewards and punishments in an after-life. This was what Plato taught that Moses did not. The great old Egyptian doctrine, extending back, as the Book of Genesis shows us, as far as the Egyptian traditions reached—the great doctrine of a Divine Moral Government, was the soul alike of the practical legislation of Moses and the speculative philosophy of Plato; and this is, as it seems to us now, their great common qualification for bearing such a part as each does in the constitution of the prevalent Christianity.—We shall have to return to this hereafter, when we have seen more of the Egyptian priesthood. Meantime, I may observe that unless there is other evidence that Plato visited the Jews than the amount of Judaism in his writings, it does not seem necessary to suppose such a visit. If he passed thirteen years beside that fountain of wisdom where Moses dwelt till his manhood, it is not extraordinary that they should have great Ideas in common. The wonder would be if they had not. The intellectual might of Moses seems to show that the lapse of intervening ages had not much changed the character of the schools: and the result on the respective minds of the two students may have been much the same as if they had sat side by side in bodily presence, as they ever will do in the reason of all who faithfully contemplate the operation of the Christian religion on the minds of men, from the beginning till now.—That

Plato derived and adopted much from his predecessors among Greek philosophers is very evident: and from Pythagoras above all. But many of these Greek philosophers had been trained in Egypt; and especially, as we have seen, Pythagoras, whose abstract ideas would appear to be displayed in a course of illustration on the walls of the Theban tombs, if we did not know that these tombs, with all their pictured mysteries, had been closed many centuries before the philosopher was born.

During all our review of the old Egyptians, we have not yet considered who they were. Of this there is little to say. It is useless to call them Copts; because all we can say of the Copts is that we must suppose them to be of the same race originally as the old Egyptians: and this throws no light on the derivation of either. Speaking of the origin of the Colchians, Herodotus says that the Egyptians believed them to be descended from followers of Sesostris; and that he thought this probable from (among other reasons) their being black, and having curly hair.* This blackness was probably only a relative term; for not only do we find the Nubians at this day, with their strong resemblance to the portraits in the tombs, of a dark bronze, but in the tombs there is a clear distinction between the absolute black of negro captives and other dark complexions. On these walls, the colour given to figures generally is a dark red. Where there is a bluish black, or neutral tint on the faces, it is distinctive merely of the priestly caste. The women are sometimes painted yellow; and so are certain strangers, supposed to be Asiatic or European. It is a curious circumstance,

* Herod. II. 104.

related by Sir W. Gell, that in the Tarquinian tombs in Etruria, all the men have the dark red complexion found in the Egyptian tombs. This rather tends to confirm the impression that the red colour may be symbolical, like the blue for the priests, and the yellow for the women. On the whole, it is thought probable that the old Egyptian complexion was of the dark bronze of the Nubians of the present day.—Herodotus says that, except the Lybians, no people were so blessed in point of health and temperament:* and he repeatedly records traits of their cleanliness, and nicety with regard to food and habits. It does not appear that they were insensible or reconciled to the plague of indigenous insects, as natives usually are,—and especially Africans; for he tells us of their sleeping under nets to avoid the mosquitoes.† Their dress was of linen, with fringes round the legs, ‡—and over this they wore a cloak of white wool, which must be laid aside before they entered the temples;—or the tomb; for it was not permitted to bury in woollen garments.—Every man had but one wife: § and the women were clearly in that state of freedom which must be supposed to exist where female sovereignty was a matter of course in its turn. Herodotus tells that the women went into the market, and conducted commerce while the men staid at home to weave cloth. || He speaks of them as a serious-minded and most religious people. "They are very religious," he says, "and surpass all men in the worship they render to the gods." ¶ He tells of their great repugnance to the customs of the Greeks and of all other

* Herod. II. 77. † Herod. II. 95. ‡ Herod. II. 81.
§ Herod. II. 92. || Herod. II. 35. ¶ Herod. II. 37.

men;* and everywhere attests the originality of the Egyptians, and their having given truth, knowledge and customs to others, without having themselves derived from any.

One of the most interesting inquiries to us is about the language of these people. To form any idea of the labours of modern interpreters of the monuments, we must remember that they have not only to read the perfectly singular cipher of these writers on stone, but to find their very language. Of course, the only hope is in the study of the Coptic: and the Coptic became almost a dead language in the twelfth century of our era, and entirely so in the seventeenth, after having been for ages corrupted by the admixture of foreign terms, going on at the same time with the loss of old native ones. Egypt never had any permanent colonies in which her language might be preserved during the ages when one foreign power after another took possession of her valley, and rendered the language of her people compound and corrupt. Without repeating here the long and well-known story of the progress of discovery of the ancient language, it is enough to give the results thus far attained.

The key, not only to the cipher but to the language, was afforded by the discovery of the same inscription written, as the inscription itself declared, in three languages,—the Greek, the Enchorial or ordinary Egyptian writing, and the old sacred character. The most ancient was found to bear a close relation to the Coptic, as then known: a relation probably, as has been observed by a recent writer,† "similar to that

* Herod. II. 91. † Penny Cyclopædia; Article: Coptic Language.

which the Latin does to the Italian, the Zend to the modern Persian, or the Sanscrit to many of the vernacular dialects now spoken in India." This key was applied with wonderful sagacity and ingenuity by Champollion the younger, who proceeded a good deal further than reading the names and titles of the kings and their officers. He ventured upon introducing or deciphering (whichever it may be called) many words not to be found in the later Coptic, except in their supposed roots, nor, of course, anywhere else. The great difficulty is that, the language having, by lapse of ages, lost its original power of grammatical inflexion, a quality which it seems scarcely possible to restore, the relations of ideas in a sentence, which in the more modern Coptic are expressed by auxiliary terms, must be disposed by conjecture, or by doubtful internal comparison and analogy. It is easy to see how thus, while names and titles, and all declaratory terms may be read, when once the alphabet is secured, all beyond must be in a high degree conjectural, at least till the stock of terms is largely increased. The stock is on the increase, however. Champollion made a noble beginning: Dr. Lepsius has corrected him in some important instances; and the Chevalier Bunsen has offered a Lexicon of the old Egyptian language, placing above four hundred words in comparison with the known Coptic. This is a supply which will go a good way in reading the legends on the monuments; by which process, again, we may be helped to more. The very singular nature of the alphabet being once understood, and the beginning of a Lexicon being supplied, there seems reason to hope that the process of

discovery may be carried on by the application of one fresh mind after another to the task which all must see to be as important as any which can occupy the human faculties. Or, if all do not see this, it must be from insufficient knowledge of the facts :—insufficient knowledge of the amount of the records, of their antiquity, and of their general nature. When the traveller gazes at vast buildings covered over in every part with writing; every architrave, every abacus, every recess and every projection, all the lines of the cornice, and all the intervals of the sculptures, he is overwhelmed with the sense of the immensity of knowledge locked up from him before his eyes. Let those at home imagine the ecclesiastical history of Christendom written up thus on every inch of the surface of its cathedrals, and the civil history of any country, from its earliest times, thus engraved on all its public buildings and palaces, and he may form some conception of what it would be, in regard to mere amount, to be able to read the inscriptions in Egypt. If he is also aware that the religion, philosophy and science of the world for many thousand years, a religion, philosophy, and science which reveal a greater nobleness, depth, and extent, the more they are explored, are recorded there, under our very eyes and hands, he will see that no nobler task awaits any lover of truth and of his race, than that of enabling mankind to read these earliest volumes of its own history.

And the world has no other resource in regard to this object. There is no doubt about the ancient Egyptians having had an extensive written literature: but it is lost. It was shelved when the Greek language

and literature became the fashion in Egypt: and previous circumstances had been unfavourable to the preservation of the rolls of goat and sheep skins, and the subsequent papyri, which contained the best thoughts of the best men of five or six thousand years ago. We may mourn over this;—we must mourn, for it is certain that they knew things that we are yet ignorant of, and that they could do things which we can only wonder at:—but the records are lost, and no man can help it now. There has been later damage too, clearly traceable. We all know how early Christianity was introduced into Egypt: and all who have been there have seen how indefatigable the early Christians were in destroying everything relating to the ancient people and their faith that they could lay their hands on. Again, the Emperor Severus carefully collected the writings which related to the mysteries of the priests, and buried them in the tomb of Alexander. And again, Diocletian ordered all the Egyptian books on alchemy to be destroyed, lest these makers of gold should become too rich to remain dependent on Rome. Thus scarcely a vestige of the ancient writing on destructible substances remains, and the monumental records are our only resource. While we take to heart the terrible loss, let us take to heart also the value of the resource, and search for the charm which may remove the spell of dumbness from these eloquent old teachers. Perhaps the solemn Memnon may yet respond if touched by the warm bright rays of zeal and intelligence; and the great Valley may take up the echoes from end to end. And this is a case where he who gives his labour quickly gives twice. Time is a more

efficient defacer than even the Coptic Christians: and the indefatigable enemy, the Desert, can bury old records on a vaster scale than any Severus. There are rulers bearing sway, too, who are not more enlightened than the mischievous Diocletian.

As for the Egyptian method of recording the language, there were three kinds of writing: the Hieroglyphic, or picture writing; the Hieratic,—an abridged form of the hieroglyphic, used by the priests for their records; and the Enchorial, in popular use, which appears to be a still further abridgment of the hieratic, whose signs have flowed into a running hand. Written language is found among the very earliest memorials of this most ancient people.

As for their social organisation, we know more of it than of most particulars concerning them. The most important however in the state appears to have been that of the caste of Priests. The monarch must be of that class. If a member of the next (the military) caste was made king, he must first become a priest.*—Herodotus says that Egyptian society was composed of seven castes; Plato says six:† Diodorus Siculus says five.‡ The classification of Herodotus is so strange that it is clear that he included under his titles some division of employments which we do not understand. He declares § the seven classes to be the Priests, the Military, the Herdsmen, the Swineherds, the Tradesmen, the Interpreters, and the Pilots and seamen. The classification of Diodorus will help us better. He gives us the Priests, the Military, the Husbandmen, the

* Plutarch. de Is. IX. † In Timæo. ‡ Diod. I. 74. § Herod. II. 164.

Tradesmen and Artificers, and, lowest of all, the Shepherds; and with them the Poulterers, Fishermen and Servants. The division indicates much of the national mind, as I need not point out. We must remember, throughout our study of the monuments, that the priests were not occupied with religion alone. They had possession besides of the departments of politics, law, medicine, science and philosophy. It is curious to speculate on what must have been the division of employments among them, when we read in Herodotus how they partitioned out their art of medicine,—there being among them no general practitioners, as we should say, but physicians of the heart, the lungs, the abdomen; and oculists, dentists, &c.* If such a subdivision was followed out through the whole range of study and practice in all professions, the priestly caste must contain within itself a sufficient diversity to preserve its enlightenment and magnanimity better than we, with our modern view of the tendencies of a system of castes, might suppose.

I have perhaps said enough of this ancient people to prepare for an entrance upon the study of their monuments. The other castes, and a multitude of details of personal and social condition and usage will come before us when we turn to the sculptures and pictures. Before going on to their successors, we may call to mind the grounds which Herodotus assigns for his fulness of detail about the Pharaohs and their people. He says "I shall enlarge further on what concerns Egypt, because it contains more wonders than any other country; and because there is no region besides

* Herod. II. 84.

where one sees so many works which are admirable and beyond expression."*

Beyond expression indeed are those great works. And do we not know that wherever men's works have a grandeur or beauty beyond expression, the feeling which suggested and inspired them is yet more beyond expression still. O! how happy should I be if I could arouse in others by this book, as I experienced it myself from the monuments, any sense of the depth and solemnity of the IDEAS which were the foundation of the old Egyptian faith! I did not wait till I went to Egypt to remember that the faculty of Reverence is inherent in all men, and that its natural exercise is always to be sympathised with, irrespective of its objects. I did not wait till I went to Egypt to become aware that every permanent reverential observance has some great Idea at the bottom of it, and that it is our business not to deride or be shocked at the method of manifestation, but to endeavour to apprehend the Idea concerned. I vividly remember the satisfaction of ascertaining the ideas that lay at the bottom of those most barbarous South Sea island practices of Human Sacrifice and Cannibalism. If some sympathy in conception and feeling is possible in even this lowest case, how far should we be from contempt or levity in studying the illustrations of Egyptian faith and hope which we find blazoned on works "admirable and beyond expression!" With all Men's tendency to praise the olden time,—to say that the former times are better than these,—we find that it is usually only the wisdom of their own forefathers that they extol;—merely a

* Herod. II. 35.

former mode of holding and acting upon their own existing ideas. They have no such praise for the forefathers of another race, who had other ideas, and acted them out differently. Instead of endeavouring to ascertain the ideas, they revile or ridicule the manifestation, which was never meant to meet their conceptions, and can never be interpreted by them. Thus we, as a society, take upon ourselves to abhor and utterly despise the "Idolatry" of the Egyptians, without asking ourselves whether we comprehend any thing of the principles of Egyptian theology. The children on their stools by our firesides wonder eternally how people so clever could be so silly as to pay homage to crocodiles and cats: and their parents too often agree with them, instead of pointing out that there might be, and certainly were, reasons in the minds of Egyptians which made it a very different thing in them to cherish sacred animals from what it would be in us. Everybody at home talks of the ugly and grotesque character of the Egyptian works of art: and no wonder, if they judge, with English mind and English eyes, from broken specimens in the British Museum. One can only ask them to trust something to the word of travellers who have seen such works in their plenitude, in their own locality and proper connexion. Probably some people in Greece were talking of the ugly and grotesque character of such Egyptian decorations as they might have heard of, while Herodotus was gazing on them on their native soil, and declaring in his own mind, as he afterwards did to the whole world and to all time, that they were "admirable and beyond expression."—I would ask for these

considerations to be borne in mind, not only for the sake of justice to the earliest philosophers of the human race, (as far as we know) but because it is impossible to appreciate the monuments,—I may say impossible to *see* them,—through any other medium than that of a teachable mind, working with a sympathising heart. If any one hesitates to grant me this much, let me ask him whether he would be willing to have the Christian religion judged of, five thousand years hence, by such an one as himself, when its existing forms shall have been long forgotten, and its eternal principles shall be expanded in some yet unknown mode of manifestation? Supposing oblivion to have been by that time as completely wrapped round Catholic and Protestant ritual as round the ceremonial of Egyptian worship, would a Christian be content to have his faith judged of by a careless traveller of another race, who should thrust a way among the buried pillars of our cathedral aisles, and look for superstition in every recess, and idolatry in every chapel; and who, lighting upon some carved fox and goose or grinning mask, should go home and declare that Christianity was made up of what was idolatrous, unideal and grotesque? If he is aware that in our Christianity there is much that will not appear on our cathedrals five thousand years hence, let him only remember that there may be much that is ideal and holy in other faiths which we have not had the opportunity of appreciating. I believe this to be the case with every faith which, from the first appearance of the human race upon our globe, has met and gratified the faculty of Reverence in any considerable number of men. If I did not believe this with regard to the religion and philosophy of the

ancient Egyptians, I must have looked at them merely as a wonderful show, and should certainly have visited them in vain.

Here then we take leave of the Pharaohs and their times; and, we may say, of their people; for the spirit of the old Egyptians was gone, and only a lifeless body was left, to be used as it pleased their conquerors. We hear of the brilliant reigns of the Ptolemies, who now succeeded to the Egyptian throne: but theirs was a Greek civilisation, which, though unquestionably derived from Egypt, many centuries before, was now as essentially different from that of the old Egyptians as were the characteristics of the two nations.

We must ever observe that there was no true fusion of the minds of the two races. The Greeks learned and adopted much from the Egyptians: but the Egyptians, instead of adopting from the Greeks, died out. No new god was ever introduced into Egypt: while the Greeks, after having long before derived many of their gods from Egypt, now accommodated their deities to those of the Egyptians, and in an arbitrary and superficial way, adopted the old symbols. There is every reason to believe that the priests, when employed by the Ptolemies to interpret the monuments, fitted their new and compounded ideas to the old symbols, and thus produced a theology and philosophy which any resuscitated Pharaoh would have disavowed. The Greeks took no pains to learn the Egyptian language, or to enter into the old Egyptian mind; and there is therefore endless confusion in the accounts they have given to the world of the old gods and the old monarchs of the Nile valley. To understand anything of the monuments

of the times we are now entering upon, it will be necessary to bear in mind that the Ptolemies and Cæsars built upon Pharaonic foundations, and in imitation of Pharaonic edifices; but necessarily with such an admixture of Greek and Roman ideas with their Egyptian conceptions as to cause a complete corruption of ancient art. It is necessary never to forget this, or we shall be perpetually misled. We may admire the temples of the Ptolemies and Cæsars as much or as little as we please; but we must remember that they are not Egyptian.

Every country weak enough to need the aid of Greek mercenaries was sure to become, ere long, Greek property. It was so with Persia, and with its province, Egypt. The event was hastened by the desire of the Egyptians to be quit of their Persian masters. Alexander the Great was the conqueror, as every body knows. He chose his time when the chief part of the Persian forces of Egypt was absent,—sent to fight the Greeks in Asia Minor. When once Alexander had set foot in Pelusium, the rest was easy; for the towns opened their gates to him with joy; and he had only to march to Heliopolis and then to Memphis. He gave his countenance as well as he knew how to the old worship, restoring the temples and honouring the symbols of the gods at Memphis, and marching to the Oasis of Amun, to present gifts to the chief deity of the Egyptians, and to claim to be his son. It was on his way there, by the coast, that he saw in passing the harbour where Alexandria now stands, and perceived its capabilities. He ordered the improvement of the harbour, and the building of the city which would have

immortalised his name, if he had done nothing else. This visit of Alexander the Great to Egypt took place 332 B.C. He left orders that the country should be governed by its own laws, and that its religion should be absolutely respected. This was wise and humane; and no doubt we owe some of our knowledge of more ancient times to this conservative principle of Alexander's government. But he was not practically sustained by his deputies; and he died eight years after his visit to Egypt.—His successor gave the government of Egypt into the hands of Ptolemy, who called himself the son of Lagus, but was commonly believed to be an illegitimate son of Philip of Macedon. In seventeen years he became king; and with him begins the great line of the Ptolemies, of whom sixteen reigned in succession for 275 years, till the witch Cleopatra let the country go into the hands of the Romans, to become a Roman province, in 30 B.C.

It was under the government of the first Ptolemy that Greek visitors again explored the Nile valley as high as Thebes, and higher. Hecatæus of Abdéra was one of these travellers; and a great traveller he was; for, if Diodorus Siculus tells us truly, he once stood on Salisbury Plain, and saw there the great temple of the Sun which we call Stonehenge:* and he certainly stood on the plain of Thebes, and saw the great temple of the Sun there. The priests had recovered their courage, under the just rule of the Greeks, and had brought out the gold and silver and other treasures of the temples which had been carefully hidden from the Persians. Thebes however was almost dead by this

* Sharpe's History of Egypt, p. 146.

time; and its monuments were nearly all which a stranger had to see. We are glad to know that the records of the priests told of forty-seven tombs existing in the Valley of Kings' Sepulchres, of which seventeen had at that time been discovered under their concealment of earth, and laid open. Some of these, and some fresh ones, have been explored in our own days; but it is an animating thing to believe that there were at least forty-seven originally; and that many yet remain, untouched since they were closed on the demise of the Pharaohs. Whose will be the honour of laying them open?—not in the Cambyses spirit of rapine; but in all honour and reverence, in search of treasures which neither moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thieves carry away;—a treasure of light out of the darkened place, and of knowledge out of that place where usually no device or knowledge is found!

We are grieved now to lose the old Egyptian names: but at this time they naturally become exchanged for Greek. On becomes Heliopolis. This becomes Abydos. Thebes (called in the Bible No Ammen,) becomes Diospolis Magna. Pilak becomes Philœ. Petpieh is Aphroditopolis, (the city of Athor). Even the country itself, from being called Khem (answering to Ham in the Bible), is henceforth known as Ægyptus.

In the reign of the second Ptolemy lived a writer of uncommon interest and importance to us now:—Manetho, the Egyptian priest. We have only fragments of the writings of Manetho; but they are of great and immediate value to us;—fragments of the history of Egypt, which he wrote at the command of Ptolemy Philadelphus. He wrote in Greek, of course,

deriving his information from the inscriptions in the temples. What would not we give now for his knowledge of the Egyptian language! and what would we not give to have his works complete! His abode was at that great seat of learning where Moses got his lore,—Heliopolis. He is the very man we want,—to stand on the ridge of time, and tell us who are below, what was doing in the depths of the old ages. He did so stand; and he did fully tell what he saw: but his words are gone to the four winds, and but a few unconnected declarations have reached us. We have a list of old kings from him: and Josephus has, by extracting, preserved some passages of his account of the Hebrews when in Egypt: but Josephus, in his unscrupulous vanity, wishing to make out that his nation were descended from the Shepherd Kings, puts certain words of his own into Manetho's mouth, thus impairing our trust in the poor extracts we have. It appears, and should be remembered, that the Egyptian records make no mention of the Hebrews; and that what Manetho told of them must therefore be derived from other, and probably inferior sources. His list of kings is preserved in some early Christian writers: but the difficulty has been how to use it, and how far to trust it. I must not enter here upon the story, however interesting, of the fluctuations of the credit of Manetho. Suffice it that all recent discoveries have directly tended to establish his character, as an able and conscientious historian. The names he gives have been found inscribed in temples and tombs; and even, latterly, in the Pyramids: and the numerous and nameless incidental notices which occur in the study of

ancient monuments have, in this instance, gone to corroborate the statements of Manetho. As the monuments are a confirmation of his statements, so are his statements a key to the monuments: and with this intimation of unbounded obligations to Manetho, we must leave him.

One event which happened in the reign of the second Ptolemy we must just refer to, as it is connected with the chronological questions which make up so much of the interest of the history of Egypt. The Jews then in Egypt were emancipated by this Ptolemy; and they employed their influence with him in obtaining, by his countenance, a good Greek translation of their Scriptures. By communication with the High Priest at Jerusalem, there came about an appointment of seventy qualified men who translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, and presented the world with the version called the Septuagint. The chronology of this work differs widely from that given by the Samaritan and Hebrew versions; the Septuagint assigning between Adam and Abraham, nearly 1400 years more than the Hebrew; and so on. For a long course of time, the learned and religious world believed that the discrepancy between the Septuagint and (so-called) Mosaic histories was ascribable to forgery on the part of the Alexandrian Jews. But now that chronological evidence is flowing in from other sources, the judgment of biblical scholars is becoming favourable to the Septuagint computation. Of course, it becomes at the same time more accordant with the recorded history of Egypt.

In the reign of the third Ptolemy lived Eratosthenes,

—a truly great scholar and wise man,—called the second Plato, and also the second of the first man in every science. He was a Greek, understanding Egyptian: and he wrote a history of Egypt in correction of that of Manetho. Their statements, their lists of kings, appear at first sight irreconcileable. This is not the place in which to give an account of the difficulty. It is enough to say that the attention of scholars has been employed upon it to good purpose; and that it may be hoped that two men, reasonably believed so trustworthy, will be found, when we can understand them, to have told the same story, and to have supplied us with new knowledge by the very difference in their way of telling it.

One great event must be noticed before we go on from the dominion of the Ptolemies to that of Rome. The Ptolemies degenerated, as royal races are apt to do; and after a few of their reigns, the Egyptians became as heartily tired of their Greek rulers as they had been of the Persian. In the time of the eighth and ninth sovereigns of this line, Thebes rebelled, and maintained a long resistance against the authority and forces of Ptolemy Lathyrus. The temples were stout citadels, in which the besieged could seclude themselves: and they held them long. When Ptolemy Lathyrus prevailed at last, he made dreadful havock at Thebes. Cambyses had done wonders in the way of destruction: but Lathyrus far exceeded him. As one walks over the plain of Thebes, whose final overthrow dates from this conflict, one's heart sickens among the ruins made by the Persian, the Greek and the Earthquake. To the last of these, one submits quietly, though mournfully,

as to a Fate: but those who do not regard men as necessary agents,—agents of an exact necessity in human history,—may find their spirits rising in resentment against the long buried invaders, as the spirits of the Thebans rose in resentment while they looked out upon their besiegers from the loopholes of their lofty propyla. This greatest and last act of devastation took place 88 B.C.; fifty-eight years before Egypt became a Roman province.

About thirty years before this annexation, Diodorus Siculus was in Egypt. He probably witnessed the beginning of the building of the temple of Dendera. He saw much religious ceremonial, which it is curious to read of, though there is no saying how far it remained true to the old ideas in which it originated. The testimony of Diodorus as to what happened in his own time is of course more valuable than his essays in the ancient history: but the latter are interesting in their way, as showing what were the priestly traditions current in the last days of the Ptolemies.

As our object in this rapid view of Egyptian history is to obtain some clearness of ideas in preparation for looking at the monuments, we need not go into any detail of the times subsequent to the building of Egyptian monuments or of the times of those Romans who erected some temples, but whose history is familiar to everybody. I need only say that after the death of the last Cleopatra and her son Cæsarion, in 30 B.C., Egypt was annexed to the Roman dominions for seven hundred years. At the end of that period, the ruler of Egypt had enough to do to keep off Persian aggression. He bought off the Arabs,—a stronger enemy,—

for a time; but the great conqueror Amrou marched in triumphant from his capture of Damascus and Jerusalem, and, after some struggle and mischance, took the great cities of Egypt, and sent the libraries of Alexandria to heat the baths of that city; for which purpose, it is said that they lasted six months.

One of the first visitors to Egypt after its annexation to Rome was Strabo, who went up the banks of the Nile with the Prefect, as far as Aswán, and has left a full and careful account of what he saw. He enlarges on Alexandria, at that time a most magnificent city, while Thebes was a village, interspersed with colossal ruins. Memphis was still great, ranking next to Alexandria: but Heliopolis was sunk, and almost gone. Its schools were closed; but the memory of them remained, on the spot, as well as afar: for the house was shown where Plato and Eudoxus lived and studied. Would it were there still! At present, there is nothing left visible of Heliopolis but its obelisk, and a circuit of mounds. Strabo thought the place almost deserted in his time: but what a boon it would be to us to see what was before his eyes, within a few years of the Christian era!

Here, then, we stop; at a period which we have been wont to consider ancient, but which, in regard to our object, is so modern as to have no further interest or purpose which need detain us.

We now proceed to the monuments.

CHAPTER X.

ABOO-SIMBIL.—EGYPTIAN CONCEPTIONS OF THE GODS.

THE temples of Aboo-Simbil are both of the time of Ramases II.;—in the earlier part of the great Third Period. Nothing more interesting than these temples is to be found beyond the limits of Thebes.

I went up to the smaller temple early in the morning. Of the six statues of the façade, the two in the centre represent Athor, whose calm and gentle face is surmounted by the usual crown,—the moon contained within the cow's horns. On entering the portal in the rock, I found myself in a hall where there was plenty to look at, though the fires lighted by the Arabs have blackened the walls in some places, and the whole is, as I need not say, very old,—nearly 1400 B.C.—This entrance hall is supported by six square pillars, all of which bear the head of Athor on the front face of their capitals, the other three faces being occupied with sculptures, once gaily painted, and still showing blue, red and yellow colours. On the walls here were the men of the old military caste, in their defensive armour; —a sort of cuirass of chain armour,—red links on a yellow ground: and their brethren the civilians, in red frocks: and the women in tight yellow garments, with red sashes tied in front. Most of the figures are repre-

sented in the act of bringing offerings to the gods: but on either side the door, the hero Ramases is holding by the hair a captive who is on one knee, and looks up,—in the one instance with a complete negro face; in the other, with a face certainly neither Egyptian nor negro, and whose chin ends in a peaked beard. Here we have the conquests of the hero in upper Africa, and probably in Asia. He holds up his faulchion, as if about to strike; but the goddess behind him lifts her hand, as if in intercession, while Osiris, in front, holds forth the great knife, as if to command the slaughter. When Osiris carries, as here, the emblems of the crosier and the flagellum or whip, he is present in his function of Judge: and here, accordingly, we see him deciding the fate of the nations conquered by Ramases.

Within this outer hall is a transverse corridor, ending in two rude chambers, where I found nothing but bats. But beyond the corridor lies the sacred chamber, the shrine of the deity. There she is, in the form of the crowned head of a cow,—her emblematic disk being between the horns. In another part, she stands, as a cow, in a boat surrounded by water plants,—the king and queen bringing offerings to this "Lady of Aboshek, the foreign land." We shall meet with Athor frequently as "Lady of the West;" and therefore as the morning star; as the welcomer of the Sun at the end of his course; and as the mild and transient Night which is quite a different personage from the stern and fixed Night of Chaos. As possessor or guardian of the West, Athor was patroness of the western part of Thebes,—"the Lybian suburb," as it was called of old.* Plutarch

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, IV. 387.

says that the death of Osiris was believed to have happened in her month;—the third Egyptian month: that her shrines were in that month carried about in procession; at the time when the Pleiades appear and the husbandmen began to sow their corn. The countenance of this goddess was everywhere in the temples so mild and tranquil as to accord well with the imagery of the Summer Night, the Morning Star, and the Seed-time, which are associated, in the Egyptian worship, with her name.—I found the figure in the adytum (Holiest Place) much mutilated: but the head and ears were still distinctly visible. Hieroglyphic legends on each side declare her name and titles. This temple extends, from the portal, about ninety feet into the rock. Little as I had yet learned how to look at temples, I found this full of interest.—In the course of the morning, we detected some of our own crew making a fire against the sculptures in the hall. Of course, we interfered, with grave faces: but there is no hope that Arabs will not make their fires in such convenient places, whenever they can. A cave at the top of the bank is irresistible to them, whether it be sculptured or not.

I was impatient to get to the Colossi of the large temple, which looked magnificent from our deck. So, after breakfast, I set forth alone, to see what height I could attain in the examination of the statues.

The southernmost is the only complete one. The next to it is terribly shattered: and the other two have lost the top of the helmet. They are much sanded up, though, thanks to Mr. Hay, much less than they were. The sand slopes up from the half-cleared entrance to

the chin of the northernmost colossus: and this slope of sand it was my purpose to climb. It was so steep, loose, and hot to the feet, that it was no easy matter to make my way up. The beetles, which tread lightly and seem to like having warm feet, got on very well; and they covered the sand with a net work of tracks: but heavier climbers, shod in leather, are worsted in the race with them. But one cannot reach the chin of a colossus every day: and it was worth an effort. And when I had reached the chin, I made a little discovery about it which may be worth recording, and which surprised me a good deal at the time. I found that a part of the lower jaw, reaching half way up the lower lip, was composed of the mud and straw of which crude bricks are made. There had been evidently a fault in the stone, which was supplied by this material. It was most beautifully moulded. The beauty of the curves of these great faces is surprising in the stone;—the fidelity of the rounding of the muscles, and the grace of the flowing lines of the cheek and jaw: but it was yet more wonderful in such a material as mud and straw. I cannot doubt that this chin and lip were moulded when the material was in a soft state:—a difficult task in the case of a statue seventy feet high, standing up against the face of a rock.—I called the gentlemen up, to bear witness to the fact: and it set us looking for more instances. Mr. E. soon found one. Part of the dress of the Second Osiride on the right hand, entering the temple, is composed of this same material, as smoothly curved and nicely wrought as the chin overhead. On examining closely, we found that this layer of mud and straw covered some chiselling

within. The artist had been carving the folds of the dress, when he came upon a fault in the stone which stopped his work till he supplied a surface of material which he could mould.

The small figures which stand beside the colossi and between their ancles, and which look like dolls, are not, as is sometimes said, of human size. The hat of a man of five feet ten inches does not reach their chins by two inches. These small figures are, to my eye, the one blemish of this temple. They do not make the great Ramases look greater, but only look dollish themselves.

On the legs of the shattered colossus are the Greek letters, scrawled as by a Greek clown, composing the inscription of the soldiers sent by Psammitichus in pursuit of the Egyptian deserters whom I mentioned as going up the country from Elephantine, when weary of the neglect in which they were left there. We are much obliged to "Damearchon, the son of Amæbichus, and Pelephus, the son of Udamus," for leaving, in any kind of scrawl, a record of an event so curious. One of the strangest sensations to the traveller in Egypt, is finding such traces as these of persons who were in their day modern travellers seeing the antiquities of the country, but who take their place now among the ancients, and have become subjects of Egyptian history. These rude soldiers, carving their names and errand on the legs of an ancient statue as they went by, passed the spot a century and a half before Cambyses entered the country. One wonders what they thought of Thebes, which they had just seen in all its glory.

As nearly as we could judge by the eye, and by knowing pretty well the dimensions of the colossi, the

façade, from the base of the thrones to the top of the row of apes, is nearly or quite one hundred feet high. Above rises the untouched rock.

The faces of Ramases outside (precisely alike) are placid and cheerful,—full of moral grace: but the eight Osirides within (precisely alike too) are more. They are full of soul. It is a mistake to suppose that the expression of a face must be injured by its features being colossal. In Egypt it may be seen that a mouth three feet wide may be as delicate, and a nostril which spans a foot as sensitive in expression as any marble bust of our day. It is very wonderful, but quite true. Abdallatif has left us his testimony as follows,—in speaking of the Sphinx. "A little more than a bow-shot from these Pyramids, we see a colossal head and neck appearing above ground. . . . Its countenance is very charming, and its mouth gives an impression of sweetness and beauty. One would say that it smiles benignly.—An able man having asked me what I admired most of all that I had seen in Egypt, I told him that it was the truth of the proportions in the head of the Sphinx. . . . It is very astonishing that in a countenance so colossal, the sculptor should have preserved the precise proportions of all the parts, whilst Nature has presented no model of such a colossus, nor of any thing which could be compared to it." * I was never tired of gazing at the Osirides, everywhere, and trying to imprint ineffaceably on my memory the characteristics of the old Egyptian face;—the handsome arched nose, with its delicate nostril; the well-opened, though long eye; the placid, innocent mouth, and the

* Relation de l' Egypte, l. I. ch. 4.

smooth-rounded, amiable chin. Innocence is the prevailing expression; and sternness is absent. Thus the stiffest figures, and the most monotonous gesture, convey still only an impression of dispassionateness and benevolence. The dignity of the gods and goddesses is beyond all description, from this union of fixity and benevolence. The difficulty to us now is, not to account for their having been once worshipped, but to help worshipping them still. I cannot doubt their being the most abstract gods that men of old ever adored. Instead of their being engaged in wars or mutual rivalries, or favouritisms, or toils, or sufferings, here they sit, each complete and undisturbed in his function,—every one supreme,—free from all passion, but capable of all mild and serene affections. The Greek and Roman gods appear like wayward children beside them. Herodotus says that the Greek gods *were* children to these, in respect of age:* and truly they appear so in respect of wisdom and maturity. Their limitation of powers, and consequent struggles, rivalries and transgressions, their fondness and vindictiveness, their anger, fear and hope are all attributes of childhood, contrasting strikingly with the majestic passive possession of power, and the dispassionate and benignant frame of these ever-young old deities of Egypt. Vigilant, serene, benign, here they sit, teaching us to inquire reverentially into the early powers and condition of that Human Mind which was capable of such conceptions of abstract qualities as are represented in their forms. I can imagine no experience more suggestive to the thoughtful traveller,

* Herod. II. 4, 50, 58, 146.

anywhere from pole to pole, than that of looking with a clear eye and fresh mind on the ecclesiastical sculptures of Egypt, perceiving, as such an one must do, how abstract and how lofty were the first ideas of Deity known to exist in the world. That he should go with clear eyes and a fresh mind is needful: for if he carries a head full of notions about idolatry, obscenity, folly and ignorance, he can no more judge of what is before his eyes,—he can no more *see* what is before his face, — than a proud Mohammedan can apprehend Christianity in a catholic chapel at Venice, or an arrogant Jew can judge of Quakerism or Quietism.—If the traveller be blessed with the clear eye and fresh mind, and be also enriched by comprehensive knowledge of the workings of the human intellect in its various circumstances, he cannot but be impressed, and he may be startled, by the evidence before him of the elevation and beauty of the first conceptions formed by men of the Beings of the unseen world. And the more he traces downwards the history and philosophy of religious worship, the more astonished he will be to find to what an extent this early theology originated later systems of belief and adoration, and how long and how far it has transcended some of those which arose out of it. New suggestions will thence arise, that where in the midst of what is solemn and beautiful he meets with what appears to modern eyes puerile and grotesque, such an appearance may deceive, and there may be a meaning contained in it which is neither puerile nor grotesque. He will consider that Cambyses might be more foolish in stabbing the bull Apis, to show

that it could bleed, which nobody denied, than the priests in conserving a sacred idea in the form of the bull. He will consider that the Sphinx might be to Egyptian eyes, not a hideous compound animal, as it is when carved by an English stone mason for a park gate, but a sacred symbol of the union of the strongest physical with the highest intellectual power on earth.

The seriousness I plead for comes of itself into the mind of any thoughtful and feeling traveller, at such a moment as that of entering the great temple of Aboo-Simbil. I entered it at an advantageous moment, when the morning sunshine was reflected from the sand outside so as to cast a twilight even into the adytum,—two hundred feet from the entrance. The four tall statues in the adytum, ranged behind the altar, were dimly visible: and I hastened to them, past the eight Osirides, through the next pillared hall, and across the corridor. And then I looked back, and saw beyond the dark halls and shadowy Osirides the golden sand-hill without, a corner of blue sky, and a gay group of the crew in the sunshine. It was like looking out upon life from the grave. When we left the temple, and the sun had shifted its place, we could no longer see the shrine. It is a great advantage to enter the temple first when the sun is rather low in the east.

The eight Osirides are perfectly alike,—all bearing the crosier and flagellum, and standing up against huge square pillars, the other sides of which are sculptured, as are the walls all round. The aisles behind the Osirides are so dark that we could not make out the devices without the help of torches:

and the celebrated medallion picture of the siege would have been missed by us entirely, if one of the crew had not hoisted another on his shoulders, to hold a light above the height of their united statures. There we saw the walled town, and the proceedings of the besieged and besiegers, as they might have happened in the middle ages. The north wall is largely occupied by a tablet, bearing the date of the first year of Ramases the Great: and on the other side of the temple, between two of the pillars, is another tablet, bearing the date of the thirty-fifth year of his reign. The battle scenes on the walls are all alive with strong warriors, flying foes, trampled victims, and whole companies of chariots. I observed that the chariot wheels were not mere disks, as we should have expected in so early an age, but had all six spokes. Every chariot wheel I saw in the country had six spokes, however early the date of the sculpture or painting. One figure on the south wall is admirable, —a warrior in red, who is spearing one foe, while he has his foot on the head of another.

There are two groups of chambers, of three each, opening out of this large hall: and two more separate side chambers. The six included in the two groups are very nearly (but not quite) covered with representations of offerings to the gods: very pretty, but with little variety. The offerings are of piles of cakes and fruit, lamps, vases of various and graceful shapes, and flasks. The lotus, in every stage of growth, is frequent. Sometimes it is painted yellow, veined with red.

The boat, that wonderful and favourite symbol which

we meet everywhere, is incessantly repeated here,—the seated figure in the convolution at bow and stern, the pavilion in the middle, and the paddle hanging over the side. One of these boats is carried by an admirable procession of priests, as a shrine, which is borne on poles of palm-trunks lashed together. Stone deewáns run round the walls of most of these little chambers. We could find no evidence of there being any means of ventilating these side-rooms; and how they could be used without, we cannot conceive,—enclosed as they are in the solid rock.

The second and smaller hall has four square pillars, sculptured, of course. Next comes the corridor, which has a bare unfinished little chamber at each end, now possessed by bats. The altar in the adytum is broken; and some barbarous wretches have cut their insignificant initials on it. Are there not rocks enough close by the entrance, on which they might carve their memorials of their precious selves, if carve they must? But this profaning of the altar is not the worst. One creature has cut his name on the tip of the nose of the northernmost colossus: others on the breast and limbs of the Osirides; and others over a large extent of the sculptured walls.

One of the four god figures in the adytum is Ra, who also occupies the niche in the façade over the entrance. Ra is the Sun. He is not Amun Ra, the Unutterable,* —the God of gods,—the only god: but a chief, as the term Ra seems to express. Phra, (Ra with the article,) by us miscalled Pharaoh, means a chief or king among men: and Ra is the chief of the visible creation: and

* Manetho says that Amun means "concealment."

here, in this temple, he is the principal deity, the others being Khem, or Egypt, Kneph, Osiris and Isis. As we go on, we shall perhaps be able to attain some notion of the relative offices and dignities of the gods. At the outset, it is necessary to bear in mind chiefly that the leading point of belief of the Egyptians, from the earliest times known to us, was that there was One Supreme,—or, as they said,—one only God, who was to be adored in silence, (as Jamblichus declares from the ancient Hermetic books,) and was not to be named; that most of the other gods were deifications of his attributes; while others again, as Egypt, the Nile, the Sun, the Moon, the West, &c., were deifications of the powers or forces on which the destiny of the Egyptian nation depended. We have also to remember that we must check our tendency to suppose Allegory in every part of the Egyptian system of theology. It is difficult to check this tendency to allegorise, bringing as we do the ideas of a long subsequent age to the interpretation of a theological system eminently symbolical to its priests, though not to the people at large: but we must try to conceive of these Egyptian gods as being, to the general Egyptian mind, actual personages, inseparably connected with the facts and appearances in which they were believed to exist. If we make the mistake of supposing them merely the names of such facts and appearances, and proceed to interpret them by the method of allegorical narrative, we shall soon find ourselves perplexed, and at a loss: for our view of the facts and appearances of Nature can never be like those of the Egyptians, whose science, though unquestionably great, lay in a different direction (for the most part) from

ours, and whose heavens and earth were hardly like the same that we see and inhabit.

For one instance,—in their theory of the formation of the world, they believed that when the formless void of eternal matter began to part off into realms, the igneous elements ascending and becoming a firmament of fiery bodies, and the heavier portions sinking and becoming compacted into earth and sea, the earth gave out animals,—beasts and reptiles; an idea evidently derived from their annual spectacle of the coming forth of myriads of living creatures from the soil of their valley, on the subsidence of the flood. When we remember that to them the Nile was the sea, and so called by them, and that they had before them the spectacle which is seen nowhere else, of the springing of the green herb after the separation of the waters from the land, we shall see how different their view of the creation must be from any which we could naturally form. In this particular case, we have adopted their traditions given to us through the mind of Moses; but where we have not the mind of Moses to interpret them to us, we must abstain from reading their meanings by any other light than that which they themselves afford us. As another instance, how should we allegorise for them about the West? What is the West to us? It is the place where the heavenly bodies disappear: and that is the only point we have in common with them. With them, the West was the unseen state. It was a dreary, unknown region beyond the dark river which the dead had to cross. The abodes of the dead were on its verge; and those solemn caves were the entrance of the Amenti, the region of judgment

and retribution. Nothing was heard thence but the bark of the wild dog at night; the vigilant guardian, as they believed, of the heavenly abode which the wicked were not to approach.* Nothing was seen there but the descent of the sun, faithful to the goddess who was awaiting him behind the hills;† and who, hanging above those hills as the brightest of the stars, showed herself the Protectress of the Western Shore. Such elements as these which they themselves give us, we may take and think over; but if we go on to mix up with them modern Greek additions about Apollo, and yet more modern metaphysical conceptions, in order to construct allegories as a key to old Egyptian theology, we cannot but diverge widely from old Egyptian ideas. And what is worse, we shall miss the perception of the indubitable earnestness of their faith. We have every possible evidence of their unsurpassed devoutness: but we shall lose the sense of it if we get into the habit of supposing them to have set up images of abstract qualities (as abstract qualities are to us) instead of dwelling in constant dependence on living divine personages. We may find symbols everywhere in the Egyptian theology; and analogies in abundance: but I do not know that any instances of complete or continuous allegory can be adduced. When we try to construct such, or think we have found them, we presently begin to complain of an intermixture of personages or of offices, such as should show us, not that the Egyptian worship was confused, but that we

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, V. 435.

† Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, IV. 388.

do not clearly understand the ideas of the worshippers, and must have mixed them with some of our own.

Kneph, known by his Ram's head, is, as I said, in the adytum with Ra; but, though a higher god than Ra, this temple is not dedicated to him, but to Ra, as is shown by the appearance of the latter on the façade. The deeds of the great Ramases, his adorer, are brought as an offering, and presented on the walls.—There appears at first something incongruous in the mingling, in these temples, of the benign serenity of the gods with the fury and cruelty of their warrior worshippers: but one soon remembers that it is an incongruity which remains to this day, and will doubtless remain till war is abolished. A custom so durable as that of consecrating warfare to God must have an idea at the bottom of it: and the idea is plain enough here. We find the same idea in the mind of this Ramases, and of Moses in his Song of deliverance, and of the Red Indian who shakes the scalps of his enemies at the end of his spear in his war-dance, and of the Crusaders in their thanksgivings for victory over the Saracens, and of our Cromwell in Ireland, and in the vindictive stanza of our National Anthem;—the idea that power to conquer is given from above, and that the results are therefore to the glory of him who gives the power. Such a method of observance, being natural in certain stages of the human mind, is right in its place;—in a temple of Ramases, for instance. The wonder is to find it in the jubilations of Christian armies, in the despatches of Cromwell,* and even in the Prayer-book of the English

* Cromwell to Vice-Admiral Goodson at Jamaica—"Make yourselves as strong as you can to beat the Spaniard, who will doubtless send a

Church, in direct connexion with an acknowledgment of the Prince of Peace, whose kingdom was not of this world.

One thing which struck me as strange in this hall of giants was a dwarfish statue, without a head. It measured two or three inches less in each limb than our middle-size, and was of course very insignificant among the Osirides. What it was, and how it came there, we could not learn.

When we looked abroad from the entrance, the view was calm and sweet. A large island is in the midst of the river, and shows a sandy beach and cultivated interior. The black, peaked hills of the opposite desert close in to the south, leaving only a narrow passage for the river.—It was nearly evening before we put off from the bank below the temple. It had been an animating and delightful day; and I found myself beginning to understand the pleasure of "temple-haunting;" a pleasure which so grew upon us, that we felt real grief when it came to an end. I, for one, had suspected beforehand that this work would soon become one of mere duty or routine: but we found, even before we left Nubia, that we were hardly satisfied to sit down to breakfast without having explored a temple.

good force into the Indies. I hope, by this time, the Lord may have blessed you to have light upon some of their vessels,—whether by burning them in their harbours or otherwise."—*Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, vol. III. p. 156.

CHAPTER XI.

IBREEM.—DIRR.—SUBOOA.—DAKKEH.—GARF HOSEYN.

WHILE at breakfast the next morning (January 8th) we drew to shore under the great rock on which stands Ibreem, the station of Roman and Saracenic garrisons, in times when it was necessary to overawe Nubia, and protect the passage southwards. It was an important place during the wars of Queen Candace with the Roman occupants of Egypt and Nubia. It appears that the word Candace was probably a title, and not a proper name,—it being borne by a series of Ethiopian queens;—a curious circumstance by itself. Of the queen Candace who marched against Ibreem (Prêmnis) we are told by Strabo that she was a woman of masculine courage, and had lost an eye.

We saw from our deck some grottoes in the rock, with paintings inside; and longed to get at them: but they were so difficult of access, (only by a rope) that Mr. E. went alone. They are of the time of the great Ramases and three earlier sovereigns of the same Period. The painting is still vivid; representing votive offerings. There are some very small statues in high relief at the upper end.

I could not be satisfied without mounting the cliff: and from its summit I obtained a view second only to

that above Asyoot. I could now understand something of the feeling which generates songs in praise of Nubia; for many charming spots were visible from this height, — recesses of verdure, — small alluvions, where the cotton shrub was covered with its yellow blossoms, and crops of grain and pulse were springing vigorously. On the Arabian side, all looked dreary; the sandy areas between its groups of black crags being sprinkled with Sheikhs' tombs, and scarcely any thing else; and the only green being on a promontory here and there jutting into the river. The fertility was mainly on the Lybian shore; and there it must once have been greater than now. Patches of coarse yellow grass within the verge of the Desert, and a shade of grey over the sand in places, seemed to tell of irrigation and drainage now disused. A solitary doum palm rose out of the sand, here and there; and this was the only object in the vast yellow expanse, till the eye rested on the amethyst mountains which bounded all to the South and West. Some of these hills advanced, and some receded, so as to break the line: and their forms were as strange and capricious as their disposition. Some were like embankments: some like round tumuli: some like colossal tents. The river here was broad and sinuous; and as far as I could see, on either hand, its course was marked by the richest verdure. The freshness, and vastness, and sublime tranquillity of this scene singularly impressed me.

The chief interest about the town or fortress was in the mixture of relics,—Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Saracenic and Turkish. The winged globe, Greek borders and columns, Roman walls, Mosques and Turkish

fortifications,—all these may be seen in half-an-hour's walk, heaped together or scattered about. The modern dwellings appear to be, for the most part, made of rough stones, instead of mud;—the stones lying ready to the hand, I suppose, and the mud having to be brought up the rock. It is a truly desolate place now.

In the afternoon, we saw the capital:—Dirr, the capital of Nubia.—On the bank, we met the governor and his suite, with whom we exchanged salutations. We were walking so slowly, and were so ready to be spoken to, that the governor might have declared his wishes to us if he had not been shy. He preferred sending a message through our Rais, whom we met presently after; and to whom he said that he was ashamed to ask us himself, but he should be much obliged to us to give him a bottle of wine. Such was the request of the Mohammedan governor of the capital of Nubia! Our dragoman could not keep his countenance when he delivered the message. We did not see his Excellency again, and he never sent for the wine: so he did not sin against his Law by our means.

Dirr reminded me, more than any other place, of the African villages which Mungo Park used to set before us. It has two noble sycamores (so-called), one of which is the finest we saw in the country. It had a deewán round it, where the old people might sit and smoke, while the young sing and dance. The governor's house is partly of burnt brick,—quite a token of grandeur here. The other houses were of mud, as usual;—clean and decent. The cemetery shows signs of care,—some low walls, ornamented at the coping, surrounding some of the graves, and pebbles being

neatly strewn over others. The roads were ancle-deep in dust. The palm-groves, with the evening light shining in among the stems, were a luxury to the eye. The people looked clean and open-faced. Some of them were very light; and these were probably descended from Sultan Selim's Bosnians, like many of the fair-complexioned people in the neighbourhood of the Sultan's garrisons.—Many articles were offered for sale, —the people hastening to spread their mats in the dusty road, and the women holding out their necklaces and bracelets. One woman asked five piastres for her necklace; and she would have had them: but seeing this, she suddenly raised her demand to twenty. She is probably wearing that necklace at this moment. The gentlemen bought mats for our tents here, giving nine piastres (1*s.* 8½*d.*) apiece for them.

The temple of Dirr interested us much from the novelty of its area and portico being in the open air, when the rest of the temple is in the rock. I may observe too that this was the only temple we saw in Nubia which stood on the eastern bank.—The area once had eight pillars, the bases only of which remain: and of its war pictures nothing is visible but faint traces. I made out only a chariot wheel, and a few struggling combatants. We have here the same subjects, and the same deity, as at Aboo-Simbil. Ramases the Great consecrates his victories to the god Ra, whom he calls his patron, and after whom he is named Ra-mses.—The corridor or portico is faced with four Osiride pillars. Through it, we enter the rock part of the temple, and find ourselves in a hall supported by six square pillars. The walls are sculptured over in "intaglio

relevato," as it has been called;—that is, the outlines are cut in a groove, more or less deep, and the relief of the interior rises from the depth of the groove. The walls are now stained and blackened; and they have a mouldering appearance which portends speedy defacement. But the king and his captives, and his lion and his enemies, and his gods and his children, are still traceable. Over the lion, which seems a valuable auxiliary in the battles of Ramases, and which is here seizing a captive, is written an inscription which says, according to Champollion, "the lion, servant of his majesty, tearing his enemies to pieces."—Champollion found here a valuable list of the names of the children of Ramases, placed according to their age and rank. In the small temple at Aboo-Simbil, the king has his son at his feet, and his wife has her daughters, with their names and titles inscribed. At this temple of Dirr, the list is apparently made complete, there being here seven sons and eight daughters, with declarations of their names and titles.

The adytum is small. The four figures which it once contained are gone: but their seat remains, and their marks against the wall. Two dark chambers, containing some imperfect sculptures, are on either hand; and this is all. This temple is twenty feet deeper in the whole than the small one at Aboo-Simbil, but it is inferior in workmanship.

On our return to the dahabieh, we saw a sight very rare to us now;—a cloudy sky. The sky looked angry, with its crimson flushes, and low hanging fiery clouds. We found the people angry too,—upon a subject which makes people elsewhere strangely passionate, — a

currency question. The inhabitants of Dirr have only recently learned what money is, having traded by barter till within a very short time. They had this evening some notion in their heads which our dragoman and Rais thought absurd, about a change in the value of money in the next trading village; and they came down to the bank clamouring for more money for their mats and necklaces. When all explanation and remonstrance failed to quiet them, Alee snatched up a tub, and threw water over them: and then arose a din of screams and curses. We asked Alee what the curses were: they were merely the rational and safe hope that we might all die.

The crimson flushes faded away from the sky, and the angry clouds melted: but we had now no moon except before breakfast, when we were glad to see her waste daily.

There was another temple in waiting for us the next morning (January 9th)—another temple of the Great Ramases;—that of Subooa. The novelty here was a very interesting one; the Dromos (Course or avenue) and its sphinxes.

The temple is about five hundred yards from the shore; and a few dwellings lie between. The sand was deep and soft, but, for once, delightfully cool to the feet, at this early morning hour. This sand has been so blown up against the sphinxes as to leave but little of them visible. There are four on each hand, as you go up to the propyla: but one is wholly covered; and five others are more or less hidden. Two are unburied; but their features are nearly gone. The head of another is almost complete, and very striking in its

wise tranquillity of countenance. Two rude statues stand beside the sphinxes at the entrance of the dromos; and two colossi lie overthrown and shattered beside their pedestals at the inner end of the dromos, and before the propyla. The cement seems to have fallen out between the stones of the propyla: but over their mouldering surface are war-sculptures dimly traceable: —the conquests of Ramases again. Within the gateway is the hall where ten Osirides are ranged, five on each hand, dividing the hall into three aisles. Here I saw, for the first time, how these massive temples were roofed. The ten Osirides supported the heavy architrave, whose blocks joined, of course, over the heads of the colossi. From this architrave to the outer walls were laid massive blocks of stone, which formed the roof. We shall see hereafter that when it was desired to light the interior, the roof over the middle aisle was raised above that of the side aisles; and the space left open, except for the necessary supporting blocks, or (as at El-Karnak) a range of stone gratings.

The Osirides here are very rude; composed of stones of various shapes and sizes, cemented together. I suppose they were once covered with cement; but now they look, at the first glance, like mere fragments of pillars. A second look however detects the crossed arms, and the crosier and flagellum.—Of the adytum at the extremity nothing was visible but the globe and asps over its door; and the sand was so drifted into the hall that we could see over the wall at the upper end.—It will be perceived that this is a rude and ruined temple, with no interest belonging to it but its antiquity and its array of sphinxes.

That evening, we had the promise of another temple for the next morning's work. We reached Dakkeh, the Pselchê of Strabo, at 10 P.M.: but we could not moor under the western bank, from the strength of the wind, and were obliged to stand across to the other shore.

The morning of the 10th was bright and cool, and we were early ashore, where we saw a good deal besides the temple. A village, small, but not so minute as usual, stands near the bank; and its inhabitants are good-looking and apparently prosperous. I saw from the top of the propylon, a large patch of fertile land lying back on the edge of the Desert, or in it. A canal or ditch carried water from the river to this land, where there were two or more sakias to lift it. At least, I saw a belt of flourishing castor-oil plants and other shrubs extending from the river to where they met the sakias. Further in the Desert I observed more of those grey expanses which tell of cultivable soil beneath, and of former irrigation. This must have been a flourishing district once; and it is not a distressed one now.

The women were much adorned with beads,—blue, black and white. Some would permit us to examine them: others fled and hid themselves behind huts or walls, on our merely looking in their faces: and of these none was so swift as the best dressed woman of them all. She had looped back, with her blue necklace, the mantle she wore on her head, to leave her hands and eyes free for making her bread. Of all the scampèrers she was the swiftest when our party began to look about them. A mother and daughter sat on the ground within a small enclosure, grinding millet

with the antique quhern: a pretty sight, and a dexterously-managed, though slow process. Several of the women had brass nose-rings, which to my eyes look about as barbarous and ugly as ear-rings; and no more. When we come to the piercing flesh to insert ornaments, I do not see that it matters much whether the ear or nose is pierced. The insertion is surely the barbarism.

While I was on the top of the propylon of Dakkeh, I saw far off to the north-west, a wide stretch of blue waters, with the reflection of shores and trees. Rather wondering how such a lake or reach of the river could be there, while the Nile seemed to be flowing north-east, and observing that these waters were bluer than those of the river, I asked myself whether this could possibly be the Mirage, by which I had promised myself never to be deceived. My first thought was of mirage: but a little further study nearly convinced me that it was real water,—either a lake left by the inundation, or a reach of the river brought there by a sudden bend. I was still sufficiently uncertain to wish my friends to come up and see; though the reflection of the groves and clumps on the banks was as perfect as possible in every line. Just as I was going down to call my party, I saw a man's head and shoulders come up out of the midst of the lake:—a very large head and shoulders,—such as a man might have who was near at hand. The sensation was strange, and not very agreeable. The distant blue lake took itself off in flakes. The head and shoulders belonged to a man walking across the sand below: and the groves and clumps and well-cut banks resolved themselves into

scrubby bushes, patches of coarse grass, and simple stones. This was the best mirage I have ever seen, for its beauty and the completeness of the deception. I saw many afterwards in the Desert; and a very fine one in the plain of Damascus: but my heart never beat again as it did on the top of the Dakkeh propylon.—I had a noble view of the Desert and the Nile from that height: and it was only sixty-nine steps of winding stair that I had to ascend. These propyla were the watch-towers and bulwarks of the temples in the old days when the temples of the Deities were the fortifications of the country. If the inhabitants had known early enough the advantage of citadels and garrisons, perhaps the Shepherd Race might never have possessed the country; or would at least have found their conquest of it more difficult than, according to Manetho, they did. "It came to pass," says Manetho (as Josephus cites him), "I know not how, that God was displeased with us: and there came up from the East, in a strange manner, men of an ignoble race, who had the confidence to invade our country, and easily subdued it by their power, without a battle. And when they had our rulers in their hands, they burnt our cities, and demolished the temples of the gods, and inflicted every kind of barbarity upon the inhabitants, slaying some, and reducing the wives and children of others to slavery." It could scarcely have happened that these Shepherds, "of an ignoble race," would have captured the country "without a battle," and laid hands on the rulers, if there had been such citadels as the later built temples, and such watch-towers and bulwarks as these massive propyla. When-

ever I went up one of them, and looked out through the loop-holes in the thick walls, I felt that these erections were for military, full as much as religious purposes. Indeed, it is clear that the ideas were scarcely separable, after war had once made havoc in the valley of the Nile. As for the non-military purposes of these propyla;—they gave admission through the portal in the centre to the visitors to the temple, whether they came in the ordinary way, or in the processions which were so imposing in the olden times. It must have been a fine sight, from the loop-holes or parapets of these great flanking towers,—the approach or departure of the procession of the day,—the banners bearing the symbol of god or hero; the boat-shrine, borne by the shaven and white-robed priests, in whose hands lay most of the power, and in whose heads all the learning, of their age. To see them marching in between the sphinxes of the avenue, followed by the crowd bearing offerings;—the men with oxen, cakes and fruits, and the women with turtle doves and incense,—all this must have been a treat to many a sacerdotal watchman at this height.—Such an one had probably charge of the flags which were hoisted on these occasions on the propyla. There are on many of these towers, wide perpendicular grooves, occupied by what look like ladders of hieroglyphic figures. These grooves held the flag-staves on festival days, when the banners, covered with symbols, were set floating in the air.—These propyla were good stations from which to give out news of the rising or sinking of the Nile: and they were probably also used for observatories. They were a great acquisition to the country when intro-

duced or invented; and their introduction earlier might, perhaps, as I have said, have materially changed the destinies of the nation. The instances are not few in which these flanking towers have been added to a pylon of a much earlier date.

The interest of this temple is not in its antiquity. It is of various dates; and none of them older than the times of the Ptolemies. The interest lies in the traces of the different builders and occupants of this temple, and in the history (according to Diodorus) of the Ethiopian king who built the adytum, — the most sacred part of it. This king Ergamun, who lived within half a century before our era, had his doubts about the rectitude and reasonableness of the method by which the length of kings' reigns was settled in Ethiopia. Hitherto, the custom had been for the priests to send word to their brother, the king, when the gods wished him to enter their presence: and every king, thus far, had quietly destroyed himself, on receiving the intimation. Ergamun abolished the custom, — not waiting, as far as appears, for his summons, but going up to "a high place" with his troops, when he slew the priests in their temple, and reformed some of the institutions which no one had hitherto dared to touch. Sir G. Wilkinson points out the fact* that a somewhat resembling custom still remains in a higher region of Ethiopia, where it is thought shocking that a king should die a natural death; that is, like other people. The kings of this tribe, when they believe themselves about to die, send word to their ministers, who immediately cause them to be strangled. This is reported

* Wilkinson's Modern Egypt and Thebes, II. 319.

by the expedition sent by the present ruler of Egypt to explore the sources of the White Nile.

Though Ergamun was not willing to take the word of the priests for the will of the gods, he appears to have been forward in the service of his deities, to whom he is seen presenting offerings, and whom he proudly acknowledges as his patrons, guardians, and nourishers. The old adytum, built by him, looks hoary and crumbling; more so than the more ancient temples we have seen: but the sculptures are plainly distinguishable. It is much blackened by fires; but in one corner, where the sculptures are protected by a block of stone which has fallen across, I found a very clear group,—of the king standing between Ra and Thoth, the god of intellect and the arts, concerning whom Socrates relates a curious anecdote in the Phædrus* of Plato. The two gods are holding vases aloft, from which they pour each a stream of the emblem of Life;—immortalising "the ever-living Ergamun," as his cartouche calls him. Under the cornice are four decorative borders, on the four sides of the chamber. One gives the emblems of Ra and Thoth,—the hawk and ibis,—squatted face to face in successive pairs: another, the royal cartouches, guarded by hawks with expanded wings: a third the emblem of duration or permanency: while on the one over the door are strips of hieroglyphics. The thrones of gods and kings have a compartment left in the lower corner of the massive seat, to be filled up with devices. Sometimes this is done: sometimes not. In this adytum the compartment is occupied by the device taken from much older monuments, and seen now on the pedestals

* Phædr. Tayl. Trans. p. 364.

of the Pair at Thebes,—the water plants of the god Nilus which are bound up to support the royal throne.

There was enough of colour left here to show us how materially the effect of the sculpture was made to depend upon it. The difference in the clearness of the devices is wonderful when they are seen in a mass, and when each compartment or side of a chamber is marked off by broad bands of deep colour. The supplying of details, and yet more of perspective, by painting gives a totally different character to the sculptures; which difference ought to be allowed for where the colours have disappeared. I am not speaking here of the goodness or badness of the taste which united painting and sculpture in the old Egyptian monuments. I am only pointing out that it *was* the Egyptian method of representation; and that their works cannot therefore be judged of by the mere outlines. The colours remaining in this chamber are a brilliant blue, a pale clear green (which survives everywhere and is beautiful), and a dull red,—deeper for the garments, lighter for the skins.

This chamber is completely cased, except the entrance, with more modern building. It is shut in, roof and all, as if it had been pushed into a box. The old doorway, also the work of Ergamun, is built round by a later devotee. The chambers erected by the Ptolemies have some modern decorations mixed in with the ancient symbols,—such as the olivewreath, a harp of a different make from the old Egyptian, and the Greek caduceus, instead of the native one.

Some yet more modern occupants have sadly spoiled this temple. The Christians might very naturally feel that they could not go to worship till they had shut

out from their eyesight the symbols of the old faith: and we therefore should not be hard upon them for plastering over the walls. We should forgive them all the more readily because such plastering is an admirable method of preserving the old sculptures. But the Christians must have their saints all about them: and there they are, dim, but obvious enough,—with huge wry faces, and flaring glories over their heads. Some of the sculptures which have been restored, and some which appear never to have been plastered, look beautiful beside these daubs.

In the portico of this temple we first saw an instance of the more modern, the Greek, way of at once inclosing and lighting the entrance to a temple,—by inter-columnar screens and doorway; called now a portico *in antis*. I do not remember seeing this in any of the ancient buildings; while it is found at Philœ, Dendara, Isna, and other Ptolemaic erections. It has its beauty and convenience: but it does not seem to suit the primitive Egyptian style, where the walls were relieved of their deadness by sculpture, but, I think, never by breaks.

There are some Greek inscriptions on different parts of this temple; and two certainly which are not Greek. Whether they are Coptic, or the more ancient Egyptian Enchorial writing, it is not for me to say.—The outside of the temple is unfinished: and fragments of substantial stone wall about it appear like work left, rather than demolished. Within one of these walls, I found a passage; a not uncommon discovery among the massive buildings which might thus conveniently communicate by a safe and concealed method.

This was our work before breakfast.—Another temple was ready for us after dinner;—that of the ancient Tutzis, now Garf Hoseyn.

I walked on shore for a few minutes, while dinner was hastened; and saw some agricultural proceedings which were amusing to a stranger. Two or three donkeys were bringing down dust and sand from the Desert, across a pretty wide tract of cultivated land, to qualify the richness of the Nile mud. Their panniers were mere frail-baskets; and when they were emptied, the wind (which was strong) carried away a good proportion of the contents; and the rest looked such a mere sprinkling that I admired the patience which could procure enough for a whole field. But carts are not known so high up the Nile, nor panniers worthy of the name. We had moored just under a sakia, whose creak was most melancholy. This creak is the sweetest and most heart-stirring music in the world to the Nile peasant; just as the Alp-horn is to the Swiss. It tells of provision, property, wonted occupation, home, the beautiful Nile, and beloved oxen. Any song would be charming with such a burden. But to us it was a mere dismal creak; and when it goes on in the night, as happens under a thrifty proprietor, I am told it is like a human wail, or the cry of a tortured animal. So much for the operation of the same sound through different ideas! The shed of this sakia was really pretty:—inhabited by a sleek ox, and a sprightly boy-driver; shaded by a roof of millet-stalks, and hung over with white convolvulus and the purple bean of this region. Our Dongola sailor caught up a little romping boy from among his companions, and brought

him on board by force. The terror of the child was as great as if we had been ogres. I could not have conceived anything like it, and should be glad to know what it was that he feared. His worst moment of panic seemed to be when we offered him good things to eat; though his companions on shore were by that time calling out to him to take what we offered. His captor forced some raisins into his mouth; and his change from terror to doubt, and from doubt to relish when he began to taste his dose, was amusing to see. Raisins were not a bribe to detain him, however; he was off like a shot, the moment he was released. I suppose his adventure will be a family anecdote, for many generations to come.

The first view of the temple from a distance is very striking,—its area pillars standing forth from the rock, like the outworks of the entrance gate of a mountain. This temple is of the time of the great Ramases, and is dedicated to Phthah,—the god of Artisan Intellect and Lord of Truth:*—not the god of Truth, which had its own representative deity; but the possessor of truth, by which he did his creative works. He is the efficient creator, working in reality and by fundamental principles, and not by accommodation or artifice. The scarabæus was sacred to him (though not exclusively) and the frog: the latter as signifying the embryo of the human species; the former, as some say, because the beetle prepares a ball of earth, and there deposits its eggs, and thus presents an image of the globe and its preparation for inhabitancy. However this may be, here we have the creative god, the son of Kneph, the ordaining

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, IV. 250.

deity, at whose command he framed the universe. It may be remembered that this was the deity to whom, according to tradition, the first temple was raised in Egypt;—when Menes, having redeemed the site of Memphis from the waters, began the city there, and built the great temple of Phthah, renowned for so many ages afterwards.—Memphis and this Garf Hoseyn formerly bore the same name, derived from their deity:—viz., Phthahei or Thyphthah. His temple has been found by some travellers as imposing as any on the Nile. It has been compared even with Aboo-Simbil. This must be owing, I think, to the singular crowding of the colossi within a narrow space; and perhaps also to the hoary, blackened aspect of this antique speos. The impression cannot possibly arise from any beauty or true grandeur in the work,—to which the inspiration of the god seems to have been sadly wanting. We saw nothing ruder than this temple; which yet is grand in its way.

The whole of it is within the rock except the area. The area has four columns in front, and four Osirides. These colossi are round-faced and ugly, and have lost their helmets, and some their heads. One head lies topsy-turvy, the placid expression of the face contrasting strangely with the agony of its position. The colossi do not hold the crosier and flagellum in their crossed hands, as usual; but both in the right hand, while the left arm hangs by the side. On the remnant of the wall of the area are some faint traces of sculpture, and two niches, containing three figures each.—The striking moment to the visitor is that of entering the rock. He finds himself among six Osirides which look enormous

from standing very near each other;—themselves and the square pillars behind them seeming to fill up half the hall. These figures are, after all, only eighteen feet high: and of most clumsy workmanship;—with short thick legs, short ill-shaped feet, and more bulk than grandeur throughout. I observed here, as at Aboo-Simbil, that the wide separation between the great toe and the next seems to tell of the habitual use of sandals.

In the walls of the aisles behind the Osirides, are eight niches, each containing three figures in high relief. In every niche, the figures are represented, I think, in the same attitude,—with their arms round one another's necks; but they bear different symbols. The middle figure of every group is Ra, as patron of Ramases; and he is invoked as dwelling at Subooa and Dirr, as well as here; the three temples being, as we have seen, of one group or family. Ra is here called the son of Phthah and Athor. The sculptures on the wall are now much blackened by the torches of visitors, and perhaps by Arab fires. But the bright colours, of which traces yet remain, may have much ameliorated the work in its own day. Across the usual corridor, with its usual pair of chambers inhabited by bats, lies the Holy Place. It has an altar in the middle, and a recess with four figures. The goddess Anouké, crowned with her circlet of feathers, and Athor are here.

This temple extends only one hundred and thirty feet into the rock.—Its position and external portico are its most striking features.

We returned by the village, and certainly should not have found out for ourselves that the people are the

savages they are reputed to be. They appeared friendly, cheerful, and well-fed. We looked into some houses, and found the interiors very clean. Many of the graves of their cemetery have jars at the head, which are duly filled with water every Friday,—the Mohammedan Sabbath. The door of a yard which we passed in the village had an iron knocker, of a thoroughly modern appearance. I wonder how it came there.

There was a strong wind this evening; and the boat rolled so much as to allow of neither writing nor reading in comfort. We were not sorry therefore to moor below Dendoor at 10 P.M., and enjoy the prospect of a quiet night, and another temple before breakfast.

CHAPTER XII.

DENDOOR.—KALÂB'-SHEH.—BIGGEH.—PHILŒ.—LEAVING NUBIA.

Of the temple of Dendoor there is little to say, as it is of Roman time, and therefore only imitative Egyptian. It has a grotto behind, in the rock: and this grotto contains a pit: so I suppose it is a place of burial. The temple is sacred to the great holy family of Egypt, Osiris, Isis and Horus; and the sacred chamber contains only a tablet, with a sculpture of Isis upon it, and a few hieroglyphic signs. The quantity of stones heaped in and about this little temple is remarkable.

I took a walk over the rising grounds behind till I lost sight of the temple and our boat and people: and never did I see anything wilder than the whole range of the landscape. There was a black craggy ravine on either hand, which must occasionally, I should think, be the passage of torrents. There are rains now and then, however rarely, in this country; and when they do come they are violent. Some of the tombs at Thebes bear mournful witness of the force with which torrents rush through any channels of the rocks that they can find. Not only were these ravines black, but the whole wide landscape except a little peep of the Nile, and a bit of purple distance to the north, and two

lilac summits to the south, peeping over the dark ridge. Nothing more dreary could well be conceived, unless it be an expanse of polar snow: yet it was exquisitely beautiful in point of colour:—the shining black of the whole surface, except where the shadows were jet, the bright green margin of the inch of river: the white sheikh's tomb behind the palms on that tiny spot: and the glowing amethyst of the two southern summits,—these in combination were soft and brilliant to a degree inconceivable to those who have not been within the tropics. There was a bracing mild wind on this ridge which, by reviving the bodily sense, seemed to freshen the outward world: and truly sorry I was to return. This was my last gaze upon tropical scenery too. We were to leave the tropic this afternoon, at Kaláb'-sheh.

I suppose even such an out-of-the-way region as this may be enlightened now and then as to foreign customs by the return of wandering traders or voyagers. I saw to-day on the eastern shore a house which might have been built by an European; its front neatly painted red and white; its doors yellow; and its windows of glass. It was placed with its back to the prevailing north wind; and it had a regular approach between buttresses. Two houses near had glass windows also. Some adventurous Nubian has come home a great man, probably, and is astonishing the natives with his outlandish ways.

While we were at dinner off Kaláb'-sheh, the people came down to the shore, and made a market. When their wares were ranged, they were a pretty sight;—the baskets of henneh, the spears and daggers, and the curiosities dug out from the temples.

Having happily some idea what to look for here, we hastened to the small speos of Beyt-el-Wellee, a quarter of a mile from the large temple, while we yet had full daylight.—The view from the entrance is beautiful, commanding the recess of fertile ground which seems to flow in from the river, and fill the angle between the hills. This recess was clustered with palms which were softly swaying their shadowy heads below us. The opposite shore was of the bright yellow of evening; and to the right, below us, stood the massive temple of Kalâb' sheh, with its outworks of heaped stones, and its traces of terraces, flights of steps, and quays, all the way down to the river. This little rock-temple of Beyt-el-Wellee is as interesting as any thing in Egypt, except the remains of the First Period. It is full of the glory of the great Ramases again. But it is not dedicated to Ra, but to Amunra;—not to the Sun of the Universe, but to the Spiritual Sun,—the universal centre of Being,—the Unknown and Unutterable,—the God of Gods. With him is joined Kneph, the ram-headed god, the animating Spirit of the creation, which gives Life to its organised beings,—thus working together with Phthah, the creator, or Artisan-Intellect. The third deity of this little temple is the virgin goddess Anouké, the goddess of Purity and Household ties. She appears very frequently in the more ancient temples, and was especially honoured in this southern region, where she becomes quite familiar, with her feather crown, her sceptre of lotus in one hand, and the symbol of Life in the other.

The approach to the cave entrance is between quarried rocks covered with sculptures of extraordinary merit;

of which I shall have to speak presently. The temple itself consists of only two chambers;—the outer hall and the Holy Place. At first, one's impression is that one can see nothing, except the two elegant polygonal pillars which were supporting this roof ages before they gave the hint of the early Doric. A few hieroglyphic signs on the faces of these pillars engage the eye; which is then led on to distinguish bands of colour; and presently to perceive that the walls have been divided into compartments by margins of colour, and rows of hieroglyphic signs. Some dim appearance of large figures, under the films of dust and mould, is next perceived; and in the inner chamber, it was plain, as Mr. E. pointed out to me, that one figure had been washed. There were the tricklings of the water, from the feet to the ground; and the figure was, though dim, so much brighter than every thing else, that I felt irresistibly tempted to try to cleanse a bit of the wall, and restore to sight some of its ancient paintings.—We sent down to the boat,—about half a mile,—for water, tow, soap, and one or two of the crew; and while the rest of my party went to explore the great modern temple, I tucked up my sleeves, mounted on a stone, and began to scrub the walls, to show the boy Hasan what I wanted him to do. I would let no one touch the wall, however, till I had convinced myself that no colour would come off. The colours were quite fast. We might rub with all our strength without injuring them in the least. It was singularly pleasant work, bringing forth to view these elaborate old paintings. The colours came out bright and deep as on the day they were laid on,—so many thousand years ago! Every moment, the details

of the costume and features showed themselves on the kingly figure I was unveiling; the red and yellow pattern on the crown, and the flagellum: the armlets, bracelets, belts and straps; the ends of the sash; the folds of the garment, and its wrapping over above the knee: the short mantle, the vest, the tippet or necklaces, and the devices of the throne. It began to grow dusk before we had finished two figures: and indeed I cannot say that we completely finished any; for a slight filminess spread over the paintings as they dried, which showed that another rubbing was necessary. I did long to stay a whole day, to clean the entire temple: but this could not be done. I was careful to give a dry-rubbing to our work before we left it, that no injury might afterwards arise from damp: and I trust our attempt may yet be so visibly recorded on the walls as to induce some careful traveller to follow our example, and restore more of these ancient paintings.

The sculptures on the outside, on either hand of the approach, are now quite destitute of colour; and it does not seem to be wanted here, so finished are the details.—On one side we see Ramases on his throne, receiving a world of wealth in the shape of tribute from the conquered Ethiopians. The Prince of Cush and his two children, all captives, are brought up by the eldest son of the conqueror; the names of all the parties being affixed in hieroglyphic characters. We see piles of ostrich's eggs, bags of gold, and ornaments; an array of fans, elephants' teeth, leopard skins, and other southern wealth; a troop of Ethiopians bringing an Oryx (antelope), a lion, oxen and gazelles: and in the lower line of tribute-bearers, we see apes and a

camelopard. These articles are admirable likenesses; and the whole procession is a most lively spectacle. But the battle-scene at the outer end is remarkably interesting, from the representation given of the wildness of the enemy's country. The foe are flying into the woods; and a woman cooking under a tree is warned by her little son that the conqueror is coming. A wounded chief, (of whom she may be the wife) is carried by his soldiers; and a boy is throwing dust on his head, in token of despair. The king and his two sons are in separate chariots, each with his charioteer: and the king is discharging his arrows as he goes.—Elsewhere on these walls, the king is his own charioteer, having the reins fastened round his waist, that his arms may be left free. The animals are, as usual in these old sculptures, admirably done; the heads of the oxen appearing to my eye as good in their quiet way as the bull of Paul Potter, in his more vehement mood.

The foe on the opposite wall is supposed to be some people in Arabia Petræa;—Eastern at all events. We have the conqueror again, on his throne, with his lion reposing at its base; in his car; in single combat, and in the act of slaying his foes. We have a walled city; and the other accompaniments of these war-pictures: but the Ethiopian tribute, and the woman cooking at her fire in the wood are more interesting to the observer of this day.

I was struck by the extraordinary grace of some of the objects about this temple. The lamp used in the offerings to the deities is beautiful;—a delicate hand holding a cup from which the flame issues; while an orifice at the elbow-end of the lamp is receiving the

oil.—In one of the groups in the adytum, I saw the first instance I had met with (except in the rude sculptures of Garf Hoseyn) of a departure from the severity of attitude usually observed. The union of the deities in the reception of homage is marked by the arm of the one hanging over the shoulder of the other.

We are told by Sir G. Wilkinson that this temple has been the abode, at some time, of a Mohammedan hermit.* Some have supposed that the Christians have been here, obliterating the sculptures. I saw no traces of them; and I think the clouding-over of the paintings is no more than may be accounted for by lapse of years, and, possibly, a less dry situation than that of many of the old monuments. We must remember that this temple is more than three thousand years old.

On leaving the shadowy speos, I found there was still daylight enough for a survey of the renowned great temple of Kaláb'-sheh. I was glad to go over it, and admire its magnificence, and the elegance of many parts; and be amazed at its vastness: but it is too modern to interest us much here. It was founded and carried on,—(not quite to completion)—by one after another of the Cæsars: and it is therefore not truly Egyptian. The most interesting circumstance to me was that here we could form some judgment of the effect of the Egyptian colour-decoration: for here there were two chambers in fine preservation, except where water had poured down from the massive lion-head spouts (Roman) and had washed away the colours. The relief to the eye of these strips of pure sculpture

* Wilkinson's Modern Egypt and Thebes, II. p. 313, (note.)

was very striking. My conclusion certainly was, from the impression given by these two chambers, that, however valuable colour may be for bringing out the details, and even the perspective, of sculptured designs, any large aggregate of it has a very barbaric appearance.—Still, we must not judge of the old Egyptian painting by this Roman specimen. The disk of Isis is here painted deep red,—the colour of the ordinary complexion. The pale green and brilliant blue of the ancient times are present; and I saw here, and here only, a violet or plum-colour.

As for the rest, this temple is a heap of magnificent ruin; magnificent for vastness and richness; but not for taste. One pillar standing among many overthrown, —rich capitals toppled down among rough stones; and such mounds of fragments as make us wonder what force could have been used to cause such destruction,— these are the interest of this temple. It may be observed too, that the adytum has no figure at the end, and that it appears never to have been finished. It is a singular spectacle,—the most sacred part unfinished, while the capitals of the outer columns, with their delicate carvings of vine-leaves and tendrils twining among the leaves of the doum palm, are overthrown and broken!

This temple is believed to have stood on the site of an older one, from some ancient memorials being found on a few of the stones employed: but the existing building was begun in the reign of Augustus, carried on by some of his successors, and never finished.—As it was the largest temple in Nubia, the Christians naturally laid hands on it; and a saint, and several

halos look out very strangely from among the less barbarous heathen pictures on the walls of the room within the outer hall.

This evening we descended the rapids of Kaláb'-sheh, and had left the tropic: and a cold, blowing evening it was.—Early next morning, the three pylons of the Dabód temple—its distinguishing feature,—stood out clear on their sandy platform. These pylons are almost the only interesting thing about this temple, which is of the time of the early Ptolemies, and carried on by Augustus and Tiberius. It never was finished; and now its massive walls are cracked and bending in all directions. The soil below seems washed or actually grubbed out, so as to endanger the mass above.

There is a mummy-pit in the brow of the hill, a quarter of a mile behind. I went to see what the little clouds of dust meant, and found some men and boys pulling out human legs and arms for our gratification. I was much better pleased with the view I obtained from the next ridge, whence I saw to the south-west the sandstone quarries which furnished the material for the temple. The recesses and projections of the stone looked as sharp cut as ever.

We were now only six miles from Philœ, where we were to remain twenty-four hours. After posting up our journals, we had enough to do in admiring the beauty of the scenery, which we had seen before only in the vagueness of moonlight. I think the five miles above Philœ the most beautiful on the Nile, and certainly the most varied,—with the gorges among the rocks, the black basalt contrasting with the springing wheat and the yellow sands, and the dark green palms;

—and soon, Philœ opening on the sight, and its hypæthral temple, (built to look beautiful from hence) setting up its columns against the sky: and all this so shut in by coves and promontories, and the water rendered so smooth by its approach to the dam of the islands, as to make of the whole an unique piece of lake scenery. Two mosques, a convent, and a sheikh's tomb on a pinnacle of the rock, gave character to the scene: and so did a woman on the shore, with her veiled face and water-jar, reminding us that we were re-entering Egypt Proper. I could not bear to miss any part of this approach to Philœ; and I therefore carried my dinner up to the deck, and received all that singular imagery, never to lose it again while I live.

At four o'clock we were close upon Philœ: but the island of Biggeh, also sacred, looked tempting, and we turned towards it, to explore its remains before sunset. The black rocks round show inscriptions in great numbers: and these are full of light and interest. Some are of the Pharaohs of a very early time; actually inscribed by the tributary kings who reigned at Thebes during the dominion of the Shepherds; and others of the great monarchs who drove out the Shepherds, and raised the glory of Egypt to its highest point. Some inscribe merely their names,—their cartouches, which catch the eye on every hand. Some append to these the declaration that they came in pilgrimage to the gods of these holy places. Some carve a record of the granite blocks they have taken for their public works; and others leave a declaration of their victories over the Ethiopians. What an inestimable country this is, where the very rocks by the

wayside offer indisputable materials of history to you as you pass by!

The other remains on Biggeh are forlorn enough. Two columns exist of a temple of the Ptolemies re-built upon a very old Pharaonic foundation. Fragments of sculpture lie about: and one pictured wall forms the side of a sordid Arab hut. The Christians have broken away parts of two great sculptured blocks to lodge an arch, which looks hideous. Wherever, in these two islands, the intaglios are filled up with mud, and the reliefs and paintings covered with clay, it is the work of the Christians, who took possession of the temples of the region for their worship.

I could not leave the high grounds of this island while the sun lighted the map-like expanse below and around me. The chaotic rocks, the desert, river, and distant settlements would have absorbed me at any other time: but now, to the south, lay the Holy Island, beyond the gold-crowned palms which waved below my feet, and beyond the piled rocks and clear shadowy river which interposed. The plan of its edifices was clear under my eye; and their superb range was fully displayed, as the sunlight was leaving their colonnades, moment by moment, and at last lingering only on the summits of the propyla. When the last ray melted into the glow which succeeds the sunset, we hastened down to the boat, and rowed over to Philœ, to the eastern cove, below the hypæthral temple, where we had moored this day fortnight, on our way up.—There was still time, before the twilight was gone, for a run up to the temples. I came down again, amazed at the vastness of the sculptures on the

propyla, and oppressed by a sense of the mass and the intricacy of the edifices. I felt, as I had done twice before, lost among them. But this perplexity was dispelled, and the whole arrangement made clear, by the careful study of the next day.

We all rose early on the morning of the 13th of January; and by half-past seven, we were up at the temples, having breakfasted, and sent away our kandjia, to descend the Cataract, and transfer the stores to the dahabieh.

I spent the first two hours quite alone,—setting out to learn the plan of the temples, but lingering at almost every step, impressed by the majesty of the *appareil* of worship, or bewitched by the beauty of the details of the adornments.

The confusion of temples of which travellers complain cannot arise from their number. The remains consist of the great temple of Isis with its accessories: a little chapel to Athor; a western chapel where the god Nilus is much honoured; a little chapel, modern, to Esculapius; the hypæthral temple vulgarly called Pharaoh's Bed; and various edifices of approach from the river. This is not so much to learn!—The confusion seems to me rather to arise from the absence of symmetry which, remarkable elsewhere in Egypt, is singularly striking here. I ventured upon making a plan, by the eye and a rough measurement, that I might not hereafter disbelieve the extraordinary perverseness of the arrangements. As this plan lies before me, I see that the propyla do not agree with each other; nor with the colonnade in the avenue; nor with those in the area. No two chambers are of the same size. The

doorways do not answer to each other, any more than the columns. There is a total want of coherence of parts. This is not only an impediment to understanding the edifices, but it causes incessant vexation to the eye, which is baulked of a view through gateways, and offended by twists and false measurements. This peculiarity once allowed for, I do not think the group of temples difficult to understand.

The first requisite to a fit survey of the Holy Island and its remains is a knowledge of why the place is so holy. And in order to understand why the place is so holy, it is necessary to be informed of the history and offices of Osiris.—I wish I might hope that any of my readers,—any who have not travelled in Egypt,—could be at all impressed with the seriousness of this subject. To my mind, no subject is so solemn as that of the faith of any race of men,—their sustaining and actuating faith,—be its objects what they may. And the objects of a sustaining and actuating faith must always be solemn and noble. Whatever their names may be, they have in them a majesty and endearment which place completely in the wrong all who ignorantly abhor or despise them. How ignorant and how guilty we ourselves may have been in our careless contempt of the idolatries of the world, we may come to perceive, when we have learned to do as we would be done by in separating the Ideas of any faith from its outward celebrations,—its philosophy from its corruptions;—and when we become wise enough to discern the close relations which we have now reason to believe exist among all the effectual faiths which have ever operated widely upon mankind. How serious a research that is which

would discover the attributes and functions of ancient deities, one may partly feel in contrasting the glibness with which the hallowed name of Osiris slips off the modern tongue with the reserve of old Herodotus, who, like other serious-minded men of his time, could not bring himself to name Osiris at all. I am aware of something of the same contrast in myself. Before I went to Egypt, I talked of the deities of that old nation as school children talk of Neptune and Apollo; as once fanciful personages who have become mere poetical images. It is very different now. As I read old Herodotus on the spot, the awe which made him dumb where I most wished him to speak, thrilled through me. There the calm benign gods were no poetical images, but embodied aspirations of the loftiest powers of man. There, the altars were no mere blocks of disenchanted stone, but the still inviolable depositories of the reverence, gratitude, and hope of whole races of thoughtful human beings, who here acknowledged One unutterable Eternal Being, through whose Attributes they lived, and moved, and had their being. —We are apt, at home, to suppose that language to us sacred from religious associations is either exclusively ours, or could not have meant the same to people living before our form of faith arose. But what should we say to such a supposition on the part of a more advanced race succeeding ourselves? Ought not they to admit the sacredness to us of our sacred language? And are we not bound to admit the sacredness to the old Egyptians of the devotional language which we find inscribed in the Holy Chambers of their temples, and which is delivered to us from out of the records of

their faith?—This is not claiming parity of value for their objects of faith and ours. It has nothing to do with the comparative elevation, purity and promise of any two faiths. It is merely a claim that the old Egyptians should be regarded as having a faith; a faith to which they might refer the loftiest ideas of a high order of intellect, and in which they might repose the affections of their common human heart.—Without a clear admission of this much, in that spirit of brotherhood which should unite us with the distant in time as truly as with the distant in space, there is no use in inquiring into the history and offices of Osiris, or of any other object of worship.

Different districts of the great valley assigned their higher honours to different gods: but Osiris, Isis, and their son Horus were generally held in the deepest reverence. I believe that, except the Supreme, Osiris was the only deity who was never named. When Herodotus has described the scourgings and lamentings which follow the sacrifices at the feast of Isis, he adds * that it is not permitted to him to tell in whose honour they scourge themselves and lament. And again, in describing the images of the dead, prepared for the guidance of the embalming process, Herodotus says † that the best represents, as he is told, Him whose name he has an objection to utter. And thus he always speaks of Osiris, by reverent allusion, and never by name.—The reason of this peculiar sacredness of Osiris, above all gods but the Supreme, was his office of Judge of the living and the dead. That which made him so universally and eminently adored was his being the repre-

* Herod. II. 61. † Herod. II. 86.

sentation, or rather the incarnation, of the Goodness of the Supreme. The plurality of deities in Egypt arose from the practice, for popular use, of deifying the attributes of the Supreme God. We have thus seen his creative Spirit or Will embodied in one god; and the creative art,—or Artisan Intellect,—in another: and we shall meet with more. His primary attribute, his Goodness, was embodied in Osiris,* who left his place in the presence of the Supreme, took a human form, (though not becoming a human being),† went about the world, doing good to men, sank into death in a conflict with the Power of Evil;‡ rose up to spread blessings over the land of Egypt and the world, and was appointed Judge of the Dead,§ and Lord of the heavenly region, while present with his true worshippers on earth, to do them good. Such were the history and functions of Osiris, as devoutly recorded by the Egyptians of several thousand years ago. And here, in Philœ, was his sepulchre, where the faithful came in pilgrimage, from the mighty Pharaoh to the despised goat-herd, for a long course of centuries.—He was especially adored for other reasons than his benefactions: as being the only manifestation on earth of the Supreme God. This made him superior to the Eight great gods, after whom he ranked on other accounts.‖ How the manifestation was made in a human form without an adoption of human nature, was one of the chief Egyptian mysteries;¶ the ideas of which will now, I fear, never be offered to our

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, IV. 189.
† Ibid., IV. 317.
‡ Ibid., IV. 189.
§ Ibid., IV., 314.
‖ Ibid., IV. 317.
¶ Ibid., IV., 317.

apprehension.—Upon his death, he passed into the region of the dead,—(borne there, as the sculptures represent, by the four genii of Hades)—and then, having passed through its stages, was raised to the function of Judge.*

Among the allusive names of Osiris were those of "Opener of good,"† "Manifester of grace," and "Revealer of truth:" and the description of him was, in the ancient words, "full of grace and truth."‡ He obtained the victory after his death over the Evil Principle which had destroyed him:§ and it was in his name, which they then assumed, that the virtuous, after judgment, entered into the state of blessedness which they shared with him.§ The departed, men and women alike, were called Osiris: this spiritual name betokening that they were now in that state where sex was abolished, where no marriage existed, but human beings had become pure as the heaven-born inhabitants.‖

When it is said that Osiris was the only manifestation of the Supreme upon earth, it must be understood that this means the only manifestation by a native heavenly resident. For all animated beings were supposed to be emanations from the Centre of Life.¶ The great Emanation doctrine which has spread so far over the world was certainly a chief point of faith in Egypt at a very early date; and it is believed that Pythagoras, recognising it in all their observances which were expositions of doctrine, adopted it from them, and thence

* Plutarch de Iside, s. 35, cited by Wilkinson, Ancient Egyptians, IV., 320.

† Plut. de Is. I. s. 42. ‡ Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, IV. 189.

§ Ibid. IV. 320. ‖ Ibid. IV. 316. ¶ Ibid. IV. 316.

sent it on through distant countries and future ages. Plutarch ascribes to the belief of this doctrine the peculiar observances with regard to animals in Egypt. The passage is too well known to need citing here: but it is valuable, not only as testifying to this great fact of the Egyptian mind, but as showing that persons comparatively ancient were wiser than too many of ourselves in seeing in their practice of what we call Brute worship something deeper and more serious than we have been taught to look for. Plutarch cites Herodotus as saying that whatever beings have been endowed with life and any measure of reason are to be regarded as effluxes, or portions of the supreme wisdom which governs the universe: so that the Deity is not less strikingly represented in these than in images of any kind made by the hand of man.—Porphyry declares "the Egyptians perceived that the Divinity entered not the human body only, and that the Soul dwelt not, while on earth, in man alone, but passed in a measure through all animals."—Thus Osiris was not the only manifestation of the universal Soul; and so far shared the lot of the humblest worm bred in the mud of the Nile; but he was the only member of the heavenly society, the only one of the sons of the Supreme, who came upon earth to make him known: and he thus took rank above them all.

It is impossible not to perceive that Osiris was to the old Egyptians what the Messiah is to be to the Jews; and what Another has been to the Christians. The nature, character and offices of Osiris, and the sacred language concerning him are so coincident with those most interesting to Christians as to compel a very

careful attention on the part of inquirers into Egyptian antiquities. Various solutions of the extraordinary fact have been offered. Some who hold to the literal historical truth of the book of Genesis suggest, as their conjecture, that Noah may have foreknown every thing relating to the coming of Christ, even to the language which should be used concerning him by sacred writers: and that his descendants may have communicated all this to the ancient Egyptians, who made a god out of the prophecy and its adjuncts.* Others have endeavoured to make out such personal intercourse between Pythagoras and some of the Hebrew prophets on the one hand, and the Egyptian priests on the other, as might account for the parallelism in question.† Others would have us understand it by concluding that the latest Egyptian priests were disciples of Plato, and put their own Platonising interpretations on the character of Osiris, as the Platonising Christians did on that of Christ. Others again, who see that Ideas are the highest subject of human cognisance, the history of Ideas the only true history, and a common holding of Ideas the only real relation of human beings to each other, believe that this great constellation of Ideas is one and the same to all these different peoples; was sacred to them all in turn, and became more noble and more glorious to men's minds as their minds became strengthened by the nourishment and exercise of ages. —It is a fact which ought to be attended to while considering the various solutions offered, that the character and offices of Osiris were certainly the same in the

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, IV. 183.
† Bayle, Art. Pythagoras, Note *h*.

centuries which preceded the birth of Abraham,—in the very earliest times known to us,—as after the deaths of Pythagoras and Plato. This is proved by the sculptures in the oldest monuments. We see in the tombs contemporary with the Pyramids that Osiris was to men then living the same Benefactor and final Judge that he was to the subjects of the Ptolemies.*

As Osiris was the manifestation of the Goodness of the Supreme Being, he was naturally identified with the most obvious benefits for which the old Egyptians desired to be thankful: and to them the greatest of benefits was the Nile. Hence arose one of their most beautiful traditionary fictions; that his body was deposited in the Cataract, whence he arose once a year, to spread blessings over the earth. Hence he was called also the author of agriculture, as the inundation may be well considered. Hence he is made to say, in one of the most ancient inscriptions, that he is the Eldest son of Time, and cousin to the Day; and that there is no place where he has not been, distributing his benefits to all mankind.†

It appears that the antagonism of Good and Evil was not very early recognised in Egypt. At first, Typho was called the brother of Osiris; and good and evil were supposed to be nearly related, and both claiming homage, as necessary and therefore worthy of acceptance. When the god of Evil came to be hated, his sacrifices began to be discontinued, and we even find his images carefully obliterated. He then became the murderer of Osiris, and was in league with Antœ, of whom we have before seen something, and

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, IV. 323. † Ibid.

who represented the sand of the Desert. This was an old feud,—this that we witness in our day, between the Nile and the Desert! Osiris declares himself, in the old inscription, "cousin to the Day;" and Typho was the god of the Eclipse. Thus, as the old Egyptian philosophy declined, and the corruption crept in which is the invariable consequence of polytheism, the brotherhood of the two Attributes grew into antagonism, and Typho became the hated and ugly monster that we see him in the sculptures,—the Satan of the Nile valley, with the ravaging hippopotamus for his symbol.

It was in his office of Judge of the dead that Osiris was presented to the minds of Egyptian guests at their banquets, in the mode of a mummy, which was carried round, as Herodotus says,* after the feast, to remind every one of his mortality. His name might not be uttered; but his idea was to be ever present. The Greeks gave their own turn to this observance, as Anacreon shows us, and used this *memento mori* as an incentive to the more eager pursuit of transient pleasure. The Egyptians were more serious-minded, and at the same time more cheerful in their views of death. Their view seems to have been that which Thales is wondered at for having professed, and which he probably adopted while in Egypt, that there is nothing to choose between Life and Death. The accounts of the saying uttered during the ceremony vary,—as perhaps the exhortations themselves varied in course of time. According to Herodotus, it was "Look at this man: you will be like him when

* Herod. II. 78.

you are dead. Drink now, and enjoy yourselves." Plutarch gives it more gravely. The guest was told that men ought "to love one another, and avoid those evils which tend to make them consider life too long, when in reality it is too short." Whatever was said, Osiris was offered to the eye, with his insignia of judgment, the crosier and flagellum, in his hands.

Osiris was said to have forty-nine titles: Isis ten thousand.* We see her now in her temple at Philœ, as the mourning widow of Osiris, and the mother of Horus. She was the daughter of Seb, or Time; and therefore the sister of Osiris: and it is said that the practice, not uncommon among the priests, and far too common among the Ptolemies, of marrying their sisters, arose from the example of this pair;—from its being supposed that such marriages must be fortunate. We sometimes see Isis as the Land of Egypt, when Osiris is rising from the river. She is the Protectress of Osiris, covering his corpse with her wings. This is a beautiful representation of her, and one which I was never tired of meeting. Sometimes she is nursing Horus. But her most important office is that of colleague of Osiris in the judgment of the dead. From her, in this office, the Greeks directly derived their Hecate; her office being not only the same, but her name standing inscribed at this day "Isis, the potent Hekte."† As the bringer to judgment, she is sometimes called the Giver of Death, and crowned with the asp. Herodotus says that the Egyptians regarded Isis as the greatest of all the divinities.‡ It

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, IV. 321, 317.

† Ibid., IV. 384, 369, 367. ‡ Herod. II. 40.

might be so in his age: and her festivals, as witnessed by him, were no doubt very majestic: but there is no reason to believe that in an older time she was so much honoured as the deities who represented a higher Ideal.—The heifer was held sacred to Isis; and no heifer was ever permitted to be slaughtered in Egypt.* The young Horus, her infant, was adopted by the Greeks and called Harpocrates and made the god of silence by his finger being on his lips. The Egyptian "Hor," however, seems to signify childhood, in the sense of entrance or re-entrance upon life; of production or reproduction.† In Hades, he appears seated on a lotus, before the throne of Osiris, and in front of the candidate for judgment. He is the child, or new life, of the region beyond the tomb. The lotus, on which the child is seated, is reproductive in a singular manner, as Payne Knight tells us,‡—by new flowers springing from seeds which could not escape from their sheaths. Isis is perpetually seen holding the stem of the lotus: and the lotus pillar, common everywhere in Egypt, abounds especially at Philœ. It is a remarkable fact, told us by Payne Knight, that Isis, with Horus on her lap, is found on a Lapland drum, and also in ancient Muscovite worship: and with a golden heifer for a symbol of worship, or idol.§ The Lapland goddess Isa or Disa is symbolised also by a pyramid, with the Egyptian emblem of Life (the most sacred of Egyptian symbols) on the apex.‖ How the ancient

* Larcher. Note on Herod. II. 41.

† Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, IV. 407.

‡ Inquiry into the Symbolic Language of Ancient Art and Mythology. —*Classical Journal.* § Ibid. ‖ Ibid.

faiths and their symbols became spread over the world, from the Ganges to Yucatan, is a question too deep and wide for us to enter on here: but if any portion had a better chance than another of diffusion by the intercourses of men, it was such as related to Osiris, Isis and Horus; not only by their congeniality with universal ideas, but by means of the concourse of strangers who for many centuries came in pilgrimage to these holy islands of Biggeh and Philœ; at one time the most enlightened spots in the known world.

The most interesting part to me of this beautiful group of temples was a chamber reached from the roof, always retired and somewhat difficult of access, which represents the death and resurrection of Osiris. This chamber is nearly over the western adytum, forming an upper story of the Holy Place. Here is sculptured the mourning of Osiris, and his embalming, funereal transit, reception by the spirits of Hades, and final investiture as Judge of the Dead. — The next most interesting portion is the birth of Horus,—to which subject the western temple is devoted. The Christians have made sad havoc here, with their mud-plastering; but significant portions may be made out; and at the end sufficient clearance has been effected to bring out the beautiful group of Isis with Horus on her knees, receiving homage on all hands, the guardian hawk overhead being surrounded with a glory of radiating water-plants.

What a symbol is this defacement itself of that action of the infirm human mind which is for ever obliterating, as far as it can, all ideas but its own! How faithless, in fact, as well as ignorant, is that zeal

which would extinguish as dangerous all conceptions but those which suit its own transient needs, and which considers as false and doomed to destruction all ideas and all expressions of them which are not at the moment present to themselves! And how great is the symbolical encouragement here in the durability of the old representations, and the ineffectual character of the defacement! These Christians flattered themselves that they had buried away for ever those old gods of Egypt, and driven out the whole time-honoured group, to make way for their saints. They thought the thing was done when they had put a yellow halo over the lotus-glory; and the dove over the hawk; and St. Peter with his keys of heaven over Phthah with his key of life; and angels with their palm-branches over the Assessors of the dead with their feather-symbols of Integrity: as the Puritans of modern times supposed they had destroyed superstition by burning altar-pieces and stripping cathedrals. But such extinction, being no man's business, is in no man's power. The mud plaster can be cleared away; and the old gods reappear, serene and beautiful, and almost as venerable as ever to those who can discern their ideal through their forms: and it may be that their worship is as lively as ever in the hearts of those who regard them (as their best worshippers always did regard them) as imperishable ideas presented in forms congenial to their times. The Christian saints, with their halos, keys, palms, and books share the same privilege. No narrow puritan zeal can abolish them. In as far as they embody spiritual truth, they must share the immortality of truth:—exactly so far, and no further. Meantime, we

who have stood before the plastered walls of Philœ, and the ruins of Catholic churches, cannot escape the admonition they convey;—to accept the truth which comes to us without daring to interfere with what comes (as *they* believe) to others: to enjoy our brightening dawn, without trying to put out the moon and stars; which would not have existed, if they had not been wanted by some beings beyond our jurisdiction, and in some place beyond our ken.

The order of the edifices at Philœ may be shortly given, and I hope clearly.

Beginning from the southern shore, where there was once a flight of steps from the water, and a quay, we find first, on the left (west) hand, a sandstone pillar, whose fellow was brought to England by Mr. Bankes. This latter is remarkable as bearing inscribed the petition of the priests of Philœ to Ptolemy Physcon, entreating him to lessen the concourse of people of rank and strangers, who lived on the hospitality of the priests while there. The answer of the king, including an order to the government of the Thebaïd not to permit the priests to be thus encroached upon, was painted on the same pedestal. From the remaining pillar a colonnade extends, continuous on the west side, to the great propyla. The thirty pillars of this western corridor are all unlike each other in the sprouting of their capitals, while the outline is symmetrical enough to avoid offence to the eye. All the vegetation represented is indigenous; the different kinds of palms, water-plants, acacia, tobacco, &c. affording a sufficient variety. Some of the shafts bear hieroglyphic inscriptions, and some are plain. The intercolumnar

screens, and the walls behind the pillars, are covered with sculptures. As I have mentioned before, this colonnade is so curved as to prevent the landing place and the portal of the propyla being seen from each other :—a great blemish, in modern eyes. The eastern colonnade is unfinished, and the part next the river is in ruins; amidst which ruins stands the little temple of Esculapius;—of course, a modern affair. Its Greek dedication bears the name of the fifth Ptolemy. Of the sixteen pillars standing of the eastern colonnade, few have finished capitals; and their shafts, and the wall behind, are plain.—The avenue between the two rows of columns is cruelly spoiled with the ruins of a mud village: among which lie two headless sphinxes.

We now come to the great propylon, whose massive pyramidal towers are the first object seen in coming up the river. These towers are built upon and beside the ancient gateway of the time of the Pharaohs. Champollion found the name of Nectanebo on this portal, and on a small chapel, dedicated to Athor, in the avenue. These are the only ancient remains, the rest of the great old temple having been overthrown by the Persians, who were scandalised at the idea of worship being carried on anywhere but in the open air. The Ptolemies rebuilt the temple, preserving the Egyptian style much more carefully than in most of their edifices. This old gateway looks very venerable, with its antique winged globe on the cornice. A smaller entrance through the great propylon,—a portal on the left (west) hand of the ancient one, leads to the temple I mentioned as appropriated to the welcome of Horus. This temple is built separately, surrounded by pillars bearing

the head of Isis for their capitals; and merely joined on to the propyla at each extremity by a gateway.

This temple forming the western side of the area within the great propylon, a row of chambers forms the eastern side. These chambers are small, few of them sculptured, and their wall, looking upon the area, rough and unfinished. The ten columns of its corridor answer to the seven of the opposite temple of Horus:—such is the want of symmetry here!

Passing through this area, and the gate of the inner and smaller propylon, we enter the court of the ten celebrated colossal columns. These columns are in pairs as to their design, but not in their position! They support the roof which covers half the court: the other half of which is open to the sky. The ceiling is still brightly coloured, as are the ten columns. They are completely covered with sculptures, which shine in a variety of blues and reds, and the pale green which is so beautiful everywhere. The walls here, and in all the succeeding chambers, are completely covered with rich painted sculptures, whose compartments are divided by borders which are not merely decorative, but emblematic also. To the uninitiated eye, these decorations are what we commonly call Greek borders,—with no more meaning than so many strips of colour. But to their beauty they add meanings such as we never think of embodying in decoration, while we have the printing-press and engraving to communicate our ideas by. Here every morsel of decoration, is a message or admonition. While by the principle of repetition, (the value of which the Egyptians understood so well) the best decorative effect is produced, every element employed

speaks its own meaning to the mind;—or did to the minds of ancient visitors. Here we have the lotus,—alternate bud and leaf stem,—(from which our common iron palisading is copied)—and there the drooping cup:—here the ibis; and there the wild-duck and reeds:—here the symbols of purity and stability in alternation; and there, those of life and power. These borders run everywhere, and fill up all spaces not required for more special appeals to the worshipping mind.

To this court succeeds a corridor which leads round the corner of the next chamber, to an entrance to some vaults. The entrance is a mere pit; and the gentlemen could not get far in the subterranean chambers, for want of light. Beyond the corridor lie two chambers, for once, with doors answering to each other. Instead of one Holy Place, there are two: an unusual circumstance, but not a singular one. We found the same, and also two portals, at Kóm Umboo, where the temple is dedicated to two deities. The western adytum here is very dark, and smaller than the other; and its walls are so plastered over with mud as hardly to leave any indications of the devices. The eastern adytum was in much the same condition: but some happy cleaning has laid open a beautiful group, of Osiris, and Isis nursing Horus, with an attendant behind. The faces of mother and child are fresh and pleasing.

This account will give some idea of the arrangement of the great temple of Isis at Philœ. I have said nothing of several lateral chambers, and erections on the roof, which have no immediate connexion with the general plan. I went wherever it was possible to go,—on the roof, and to the top of both propyla: so that the

confusion I had felt so painfully before disappeared under the study from the heights of the edifice.

As for the external buildings,—there is a little temple on the western bank filled with the pictured feats and honours of the god Nilus, who is there for ever at his favourite work of binding up his water plants.—On the eastern side, there was once a fine portal of approach which is now filled up nearly to the capitals of its columns, and built up between those capitals, and thus made into a wretched Arab hovel. As it was empty, and had sculptures, and the capitals were beautiful, I went in, and was presently surprised by darkness. A man, woman and boy had blocked up the entrance by sitting down outside on the mud heap which nearly occupied the space. They demanded baksheesh in a very different tone from that which they would have employed if our dragoman or the gentlemen had been in view. The woman slipped in, and laid hold of me, trying to wrench my gold pencil-case out of my hand, while the man and boy spread themselves so as still to cover the entrance. I knew, however, at what peril any body in Egypt robs a stranger, and that I was perfectly safe. I gave these people nothing, and got away safe by insisting on a passage over the mud heap. As I emerged, the trio ran away, and I saw no more of them.

I found my party preparing to lunch on the terrace of the temple called Pharaoh's Bed. This temple was built with a view to its aspect from the river; and truly, the Ptolemies and Cæsars have given a fine object to voyagers who gaze up at Philœ. We who live in an English climate can hardly reconcile our unaccustomed taste to a hypæthral building anywhere;

the only building of that kind that we have at home being the village Pound; and walls without roof not answering to our idea of an edifice at all. But I felt here, and at night, how strong is the temptation to abstain from roofing public buildings, when, above the canopy of the clear air, there are the circling stars to light them. When I saw this temple roofed with Orion and Aldebaran, I could ask for nothing better.

I went three times round the whole outside of the temples, so as to obtain some permanent impression of the immense array of gods, offerers, cartouches and legends.—I saw here, for the first time, a front face among the sculptures;—a proof of their not being ancient. It was the middle face in more than one group of captives, whom the conqueror was holding by the hair, preparatory to cutting off their heads.

On a plain space of wall is inscribed the Latitude and Longitude of Philœ, as ascertained by the French Commissioners whose names are appended. The same service is much wanted higher up the river.—There are inscriptions in different parts of the temple recording the visits of the expedition sent here by Gregory XVI., and of the French republican army under Dessaix in 1799.

At last, it was time to go;—absolutely necessary to go; for the boat was waiting which was to take us to Mahatta. We returned again and again to verify points on which we were not, on first comparing notes, fully agreed: but this lingering must come to an end. We could yet see Philœ for some time: and how different it looked now when we understood every angle and every recess! At last we rounded the point

which intervenes between Philœ and Mahatta; and we saw the Holy Island no more. "By Him who sleeps in Philœ," I vowed never to part with its image from my interior picture-gallery.

At Mahatta we found asses awaiting us, in the care of two of our crew who had remained with the Dahabieh. Of these, the Buck was one; and his glee at seeing us again was uncontrollable. He shook hands with us all at great length; and kept up a most vigorous pantomime all the way to Aswán. He had dressed himself as splendidly as was in his power. Where his blue shirt had been cut to strips by repeated floggings, he had inserted a large square white patch. He wore prodigious yellow slippers, and a clean white turban: and he had dyed his nails with henneh.

We enjoyed our ride through the Desert to Aswán, and our re-entrance there upon the comforts of our spacious dahabieh. We had visitors to receive, and visits to make, this evening; and on the middle of the next day (January 14th) we set off down the river,—with our heads full of Thebes.

CHAPTER XIII.

KÓM UMBOO.—QUARRIES OF SILSILEH.—ADFOO.—EILETHYIA.—OLD EGYPTIAN LIFE.—ISNÁ.—ARMENT.

FOUR days and several temples lay, however, between us and Thebes. I will hasten over these temples, observing only their distinguishing characteristics; for I am aware that there is all the difference in the world between painfully putting together in the imagination the details of a written description of such objects, and calling up without effort that bright and solemn image of these marvellous old monuments which remains in the minds of those who have visited them.

We arrived off Kóm Umboo at ten at night of the day we left Aswán: and early in the morning we were up at the temples.

The principal temple here was rebuilt by the Ptolemies on the site of an ancient one bearing the date of the Pharaohs of an early part of the Third Period. The only piece of this great antiquity remaining is a gateway dedicated to Savak, the Lord of Umboo. The larger temple is dedicated to him and to Aroeris, the brother of Osiris: and there are two entrances, each with the winged globe on its cornice; and there were two adyta, side by side. They are buried and lost; but the cornices of their portals are just visible above the

sand. This son of Time, Aroeris, is the god of Light; and his colleague Savak is a local deity of the Sun, bearing rule over this southern region, but hated by the former inhabitants of the next region to the north, who waged a savage war with his worshippers, on account of him;—in much the same spirit apparently as the Catholics of our middle ages with the Mohammedans, or the Puritans of our later age with the Catholics: that is, with the passion which seems peculiarly to belong to a faith too intense for its comprehensiveness. No wars are so cruel as wars for religion: and this warfare appears to be the only one in old Egypt in which the combatants are charged (whether falsely or not) with having eaten their enemies. The hawk and the crocodile are the symbols of Aroeris and Savak: and they are found in companionship in every part of the sculptures of this temple.—The thick grove of columns here has a very imposing effect; and the mass of overthrown blocks makes one doubt whether any force short of an earthquake could have been the destructive agent here.

One curious architectural device of the Egyptians, which we found almost everywhere by looking for it, is here apparent at a glance, when one stands on the great circuit wall which incloses the whole group of edifices;—their plan of regularly diminishing the size of the inner chambers, so as to give, from the entrance, an appearance of a longer perspective than exists. They evidently liked an ascending ground, the ascent of which was disguised as much as possible by the use of extremely shallow steps. The roof was made to descend in a greater degree, the descent being con-

cealed inside by the large cornices and deep architraves they employed. The sides were made to draw in; and thus the Holy Place was always small; while to those who looked towards it from the outer chambers, (and it was entered by the priests alone) it appeared, not small, but distant. I had observed this in some of the Nubian temples, when looking at them sideways from a distance; but here it was particularly evident; the roof descending in deep steps from the portico to the pronaos; from the naos to the corridors; and from the corridors to the adyta; which last were level with the sand.

When I was in the portico, looking up at the architraves, I saw into another ancient secret, which I should have been sorry to have overlooked. Some of the paintings were half-finished; and their ground was still covered with the intersecting red lines by which the artists secured their proportions. These guiding lines were meant to have been effaced as soon as the outlines were completed; yet here they are at the end of, at least, two thousand years! No hand, however light, has touched them, through all the intervening generations of men:—no rains have washed them out, during all the changing seasons that have passed over them:—no damp has moulded them: no curiosity has meddled with them. It is as if the artist had lain down for his siesta, with his tools beside his hand, and would be up presently to resume his work: yet that artist has been a mummy, lying somewhere in the heart of the neighbouring hills, ever since the time when our island was bristling with forests, and its inhabitants were dressed in skins, and dyed their bodies blue with woad, to look terrible in battle. In another

part of this temple, the stone is diced in small squares, to receive the hieroglyphic figures.

The other temple was built on an artificial platform, and must have looked nobly from the river, as indeed its remains still do by moonlight. I found among the strewn fragments one capital, and only one, bearing the head of Athor,—the last relic perhaps of a colonnade which here crowned the precipitous bank. My journal records that we were much impressed by these ruins,—the size of the parts, and the extraordinary character of their wreck. The wading among blocks of sculptured stone, having the eye caught incessantly by some exquisite device or gay bit of painting, is a strange experience. So far from becoming tired of temple-haunting, we found the eagerness grow from day to day.

In the afternoon, we plunged back into the times of the old Pharaohs,—into the early centuries of the Third Period. We went over the quarries at Silsileh, and saw excavations which might almost make us think that the whole human race had come here for building material, from the founding of Babel to the arrival of the lazy Arabs. On the east side, I wandered long and far among lanes and areas in the rock, where the sides spring up like the walls of a mine, or retire in sharp cut gradation, to a mountainous height. All the variety I came upon in this silent wilderness of cut stone, was the tracks of a hyæna in the sand, and the marks in the rock of the tools of three or four thousand years ago. Some of these marks were evidently for the purpose of trying tools. The marks remain; but we long in vain to know what the tools were like. Others seem to have been made in sport; perhaps in

illustration of some story the workmen were telling and listening to, while eating their lentil pottage. On the western bank we found much more;—grottoes, pillars, tablets, niches, statues, sculptures and paintings,—all of very ancient date. We have the conquering Pharaoh—Horus, successor of Amunoph III., overriding the Ethiopians, receiving the captives, whose arms are tied in all manner of ways,—some with the elbows above their heads;—and holding groups of the foe by the hair, threatening to cut off their heads. We see him borne in a shrine on men's shoulders, with files of soldiers in attendance, and the lion pacing along beside the royal chariot.—In another place we have the most solemn representation those old artists knew how to offer;—the king receiving the symbol of Life from the Supreme god.

The historian revels among such memorials as these. The invariable practice here of sculpturing the names and titles of the kings, and often of their chief officers; and the descriptions of the people conquered; and the names of offerers as well as gods, makes research here a self-rewarding effort, very unlike the painful and uncertain speculation which is all that can be attempted among the antiquities of more modern countries. To the historian, such places as these are a glorious field: but they are not less interesting to the moralist or the poet. What a proof it is of the sanctity of the work of temple-building that the very quarries were consecrated to the gods! Truly, they were a religious people, these old Egyptians:—receiving their children as from the gods; bringing their children to the temples in bands to make offerings; invoking

the Judge of the dead at their banquets; presenting their conquests as sacrifice to the heavenly powers; and consecrating their work of temple-building by first making the very rocks holy which were to furnish the material. There is a great congregation of gods here, receiving offerings from several Pharaohs. Savak is the local deity: and the god Nilus holds a higher rank than usual: some think because the river here narrows between the rocks, and runs with a strong current: and others because much of the stone cut here for distant works, was committed to the charge of Nilus for transport.—The tablets bear some inscriptions of great historical value; and particularly a record of Assemblies held in various years of the reign of the Great Ramases. What these Assemblies were, in their object and details, perhaps some future decipherer of Egyptian records will tell us. At present we know only that they were held in the great halls of the temples, and were considered of the utmost importance; so that the title of President of the Assemblies was one of the highest dignity, offered to the king alone on earth, and supposed to be enjoyed by the gods in their own regions.*

We set off after breakfast, on the morning of the 16th, to see the great Adfoo temple, walking about a mile through millet patches, stubble and dust. From our deck we had seen what looked like clouds of smoke rising from the town, and partly obscuring the great propyla. When we reached the edifice this appearance was explained in a way which pleased us very much. The people were carrying off the dust from the area of

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, V. 288.

the temple, to qualify the rich mud of the shore: and donkeys were passing in and out under the entrance gate. Men were loading their asses within the area; and we found the place wonderfully improved since our former visit. We could still handle the capitals of the tallest columns by walking on the sand between them; but the western colonnade and area wall were cleared almost to their bases. The external sculptures of the propylon indicate, however, that much remains to be done; for the captive groups, whose heads the victor is threatening, hardly show their noses above ground. The process which was going forward of course covered us with dust; but we rejoiced in it, for the sake of the good done; if only the Arabs do not fill the court with something worse than even this dust;—with such mud hovels as are stuck all over the roofs, and ruin the outline of this magnificent temple. —The dust was of the less consequence to some of us that we were destined to be at all events half-choked. The temple chambers can be reached only by going down a hole like the entrance to a coal-cellar, and crawling about, like crocodiles, on the sand within, there being barely room, in some places, to squeeze one's prostrate body between the dust and the roof, with a huge capital of a pillar on either hand. The having to carry lights, under penalty of one's own extinction in the noisome air and darkness if they go out, much complicates the difficulty; so that a proper visit to the interior of the Adfoo temple is really something of an adventure. I could not, under the circumstances, trace out the disposition of the building: but five gentlemen, the dragoman and I, pene-

trated a considerable way;—as far indeed as it was possible to go; traversing, it seemed to me, three chambers, and ending in one which, from its oblong form, I should have supposed to be a corridor; but which, having apparently but one door, must, in that case, have been the adytum. The sculptures were clear and clean; but the place was too stifling, with half-a-dozen people and tallow candles in it, and no fresh air for many years, to admit of more than a rapid survey. The sculptures exhibited offerings to the gods; the offerers being Ptolemies. The temples at Adfoo were both erected by successive monarchs of that race; and the interest of this magnificent edifice is therefore rather owing to its being, from its durability, a model to us of the plan and structure of an Egyptian temple, and to the richness of its architecture and sculpture, than to any charm of antiquity.

Its extent and massive character are best perceived from the top of the propylon. For the beauty of the view beyond, too, every traveller should go there. The mass of temple buildings below is a fine centre for such a landscape. About this centre is gathered the poor town, whose fields spread to the river. Almost the whole wide circuit within the blue mountains, or yellow limestone hills on the horizon, is one bright green level. The only interruptions are from the winding river, and some pools among the western fields; pools at present, but canal at the time of the subsidence of the Nile.

As the morning was shady and cool, we returned on foot to the boat, where we shook off our dust, and wrote our journals, in preparation for new enterprises. The

winds were now less cold and strong than within the tropics: but we had frequent cloudy skies,—as to-day, for a short time. Towards evening, the sky cleared to the west; and the shore at El Kab, where we were mooring, was gorgeously lighted up by a parting gleam. —A strange-looking wall tempted us ashore; and we found that this circuit-wall of the vanished city of Eilethyia, whose tombs we were to see to-morrow, was in fact a substantial fortification, containing a hollow-way between two stout masses of crude brick. This wall enclosed an area large enough for an extensive city: and a level stretches behind, from the wall to the mountains, which might, in the days of the prosperous old tillage, when Egypt was the granary of the world, easily support the population of the district.

The morning of the 17th was charming; most favourable for our ride to the tombs in the Desert. Our asses were of the smallest; so small that the gentlemen could help them on by using a walking-stick as they rode. I never before saw such a variety in the size and strength of animals of the same race, in near neighbourhood. To-day it was like riding a dog,—and in two days more, at Thebes, we were mounted on donkeys almost as large and strong as mules.

The arid plain that we rode over had drifts of stones which seemed to show that vehement torrents sometimes sweep down here from the hills. The recesses of the Desert are very striking,—so utterly still and dreary, with nothing but the blue shadows coming and going, from century to century. Here and there we passed to-day shallow pools of salt water; and there were crusts of natron on the soil.

We visited a very small and very ancient temple, about three miles from the river; and two less antique, nearer the old town. But temples must be imposing indeed to obtain much attention here, where we come upon some old tombs for the first time. In the temples we have the worship and the wars of the old Egyptians. In some of the tombs, we have their thoughts of death, judgment and retribution: but in many we have their daily life, their occupations, their festivals and their mirth; and these are interesting beyond description.

The tombs at Eilethyia are grottoes in the rock; vaulted, and with ceilings elaborately painted. Some have a pit before the entrance; some have pits within; and others communicate with holes or low-roofed caverns where the dead might be deposited. The date is known by the names of several kings being inscribed in the most easterly tomb; those kings being of the beginning of the Third Period, immediately after the expulsion of the Shepherds.

The moment of entering these tombs is that of a sudden withdrawing of the clouds which overhang those far distant ages. Hitherto, we have learned something of their devotional conceptions and feelings; something of their philosophy; and much of their arts of war and of building: but thus far we have learned nothing of the every-day life of common people, except that the offerings in the temples prove what they had to eat, drink, wear and use. Now, however, on entering these and other tombs, the dimness that overhangs the Nile valley clears away, and we see the people at work in the fields, and busy on the river, and merry in their houses. It is no dream,—no transient vision,—with

clouds driving up to hide it from us again. It is steady before our eyes, and we can take our time in studying it. We can note every article of dress; every instrument of music; and the very dishes preparing for dinner. How wonderful it is! And what a fortunate thing for us that it was the custom in Egypt for the owner of a tomb to paint it all over with pictures of his life, its possessions, its interests and its deeds!—Now let us see what this family are doing;—master, mistress, children and servants.

This is a rich man. With us, he would be a very rich man: and his possessions are such as would make him wealthy in any part of the world. The first we see of him is in the field where his labourers are ploughing and sowing: that is, his chariot is in the field; so he is no doubt overlooking his people. The inundation has of course subsided: and it appears that his land does not lie very low. If it did, he would hardly be setting his people to plough, but merely to sprinkle the seed on the slime;—to cast his bread upon the waters, that he might find it again, after many days. This plough, however, is a very simple affair; and not wanted to go very deep. A mere scratching of the surface is enough, in such a soil as this. If any stiff clods turn up, they are broken with the hoe: but that does not seem to be the case here; for the sower follows the ploughman pretty closely. Herodotus thought the Egyptians very enviable in his day for the ease with which their husbandry was managed. There were no people in the world, he says, who obtained their corn with less labour and pains. "They are not obliged to make toilsome furrows with the plough, to

break the clods, and to give to their fields the cares which the rest of men bestow; but when the river has of its own accord watered their lands, and the waters have retired, then everyone lets in his hogs, and afterwards sows his field. When the sowing is done, the oxen are driven upon the ground; and after these animals have buried the grain by trampling it in, there is only to await quietly the time of harvest." * There is nothing said here of the subsequent irrigation which is quite as toilsome a process as any ploughing in Greece could ever have been. What a waste of seed this sower is making,—unless that cataract of seed is a flourish of the artist's! He seems to throw more from his hand than any hand can hold,—or even the basket from which he takes his supply. If it has been "a good Nile" this year, here will be corn for export, after every one is well fed at home.—Ah! we shall soon see that: for here, in the second line of paintings, we are carried on to the harvest. The crops seem certainly very vigorous. This tallest growth is millet, of course: the next, barley; the shortest, wheat. They cut the wheat-ears off short with a sickle very like ours: but they pull up the millet by the roots. There is a woman uprooting it now. Probably they use the stalks for fencing, thatching, or bedding the cattle, as the country people do at this day. What is that man doing with the roots of the plucked millet? Is he knocking off the earth from them? That is a neat sheaf that his comrade is tying; and the man who is carrying another seems to find it large and heavy, as indeed it looks. That instrument, with teeth like a comb, seems to work

* Herod. II. 14.

cleverly in stripping off the grain from the stalk.—It is only the millet that is so treated; for here, in the third line, is the threshing-floor, with the oxen treading out the wheat. The driver is singing; and here is actually his song, written up beside his picture:— *

"Thresh for yourselves, O oxen! Thresh for yourselves.
Thresh for yourselves, O oxen! Thresh for yourselves.
Measures for yourselves! Measures for your masters.
Measures for yourselves! Measures for your masters."

This is the song this driver was singing while Moses was a child.—The wheat is swept up, and delivered to the winnowers; who are making showers in the air with the falling wheat. And here it is carried to the place where the scribe is ready to see it measured and deposited in the granary.

These scribes look like very stiff writers. How formally they hold the tablet, supporting the left arm on the bent knee! and how hard they seem to be bearing on the style, as if it were steel; and they were engraving! But this is only a bit of energy put in by the artist; for the style was only a reed pen; and it made its marks with coloured inks.—But here are several scribes, taking account of many things besides the grain which is brought home.—These bags that they are causing to be weighed before them, are money bags. This must be a very rich man. Here are gold rings too;—the ancient form of currency.—And here is the live stock: cattle, asses, pigs, goats: what an array! —And the gentleman was a sportsman too, I suppose; or, at least, chose to have his table well supplied; for here are game, and geese, and fish. Probably, the Nile

* Champollion. Lettres sur l'Egypte, 11th and 12th letters.

left him plenty of fish within his embankments, when the waters retired: or he might keep fish-ponds stocked; as it appears some people did. The old Egyptians must have been very fond of fowling, judging by the number and variety of nets, and the multitude of fluttering birds which we see among the domestic pictures.—Ah! these people have taken more fish and geese than they want at present; and here we see them salting them. From what we saw ourselves just now, there must have been a good deal of salt produced in the neighbourhood: and if not enough for everybody, more was brought down the river by the traders from Ethiopia, where we know salt was brought from the east for sale.

Here is a wine-press:—no wonder! for we are coming presently to the picture of a banquet. We know that the kings and the priests were much restricted in the use of wine; but the sculptures and paintings show that there was much wine-bibbing among gentlemen and ladies generally. Every landed proprietor seems to have had his wine-press; as far as this kind of evidence goes: and the sick and tipsy guests at banquets are really a scandal to those old times.—By the way, those who had wine-presses must have had lands extending backwards to the skirts of the hills; for vines will not grow in the rich Nile mud, nor bear being laid under water for months at a time. The great valley must have been skirted with vineyards in those old times. Besides all that they grew, we know that they imported wine largely, as soon as they could get it. One way and another,—as medicine, or with their food, or at their banquets, they certainly disposed

of a great deal. And here are a group of servants, treading the grapes very energetically.

What a splendid affair this boat is, with its band of rowers, and its pavilion, with door and two windows;—quite a house!—and the gay sail, all chequered with bright colours! How well these people wove and dyed in those days! This sail is bulging, as if in a strong wind, which implies that it is stout as well as gay. What is this wheel, on the roof of the pavilion, and under the corner of the sail? For a long time I believed that this was part of the tackle; and I made a drawing of it for future inquiry. From Sir G. Wilkinson I learn* that I did not use my eyes well, or I might have seen that this is the wheel of a chariot, which is placed there for conveyance. I might have discovered this by the horses, whose heads appear in my sketch, in front of the pavilion. This other boat, rowing the contrary way, makes all clear. Here the sail and mast are down; and the chariot on the roof is unmistakeable; besides that the horses stand on the deck. The rudder is in shape an enormous paddle, swung on a pivot by a little man standing at the stern. How eager the pilot looks, making gestures from his place at the bow! These capacious and handsome boats,—vessels of a higher order than such as are represented among the chattels of ordinary landed proprietors,—make me hope that this is indeed the tomb of the old Egyptian admiral, which Champollion studied so successfully at Eilethyia. His tablet tells that he was "Chef des nautonniers" in the reign of Thothmes I.; that he served in the earlier time of Amosis, and did battle to great purpose

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, III. 197.

while he commanded on the water: and also that he was himself named Amosis.*—If this be indeed Amosis, he returned from his exploits on the water to a life of great plenty and some merriment on the shore.

Some merriment: for here is a grand banquet. The provision is various: quarters of beef, cakes, fruits, wine flasks, &c. And in the reception room, how decorous is every thing!—at least, before dinner! Here are the host and hostess, in a handsome chair, looking towards their guests, who are ranged in front, the gentlemen in one file; the ladies in another. Every lady is smelling at a large water-lily with all her might. To the host's chair a monkey is tied. Perhaps Amosis brought it home after one of his voyages up to the south. There is a row of musicians, playing on the harp and the double-pipe, and some clapping; by way of a little amusement before dinner.

But to all things there comes an end. We see here the day (how far back in the depths of time!) when these merry feasts were all over,—the lilies dead,—the music hushed,—the last of this man's harvests stored,—the last trip enjoyed by boat or chariot. The fish need no more fear him in their pools, nor the fowl among the reeds. Here he is lying under the hands of the embalmers; and next we see him in mummy form on the bier, in the consecrated boat which was to carry him over the dark river, and land him at the gates of the heavenly abode where the Spirits of the dead, and the Judge Osiris were awaiting him, to try his deeds, and pronounce his sentence for eternal good or ill.—Here are the life and death of a man who lived so long

* Lettres sur l'Egypte.

ago that at the first mention of him, we think of him as one having no kindred with us. But how like ours were his life and death! Compare him with a retired naval officer made country gentleman in our day, and in how much less do they differ than agree!

I was sorry to see carved,—actually cut,—among the sculptures of the easternmost tomb at Eilethyia, among the intrusions of many who knew no better, such names as these of Irby and Mangles, Belzoni, and Madden. If visitors must leave their names, why not do it on the rough rock by the entrance? Can there ever come a day, however far off, when it will not be a sin for strangers to carve their names all over the statuary in Westminster Abbey?

In the afternoon, between Eilethyia and Isna, we passed five boats with European flags;—one of which was Russian, and the rest English. The Russian countess was an English woman, moreover. I could not but hope that these travellers would not pronounce decisively on the scenery of Egypt, as observed from their boats; for they were too late in the season to see much without the effort of going often ashore. The river had sunk so much that we hardly recognised some districts, whose aspect appeared totally altered from what it was a few weeks before. We had missed the birds, while we were up in Nubia. We never saw again such myriads as filled the depths of the heavens when we set out on our voyage: but now we began to note large flights of them, increasing daily as we drew near the plain of Thebes.

I think I had better say little of Isna, whose temple is so universally praised that every one knows all

about it. Those have heard of it who are ignorant of almost every thing else about Egypt. If it were ancient, I could not refrain from giving my impressions of it: but the only relic of the old edifice supposed to exist is a small red door jamb, bearing date in the time of Thothmes I., mentioned by Champollion. The portico bears the names of the Cæsars: and, however greatly the world is obliged to them for erecting a very majestic and elegant temple, we are not aided by it in our researches into the affairs of the old Egyptians. The Pasha, as is known, cleared out the portico to the very bases of the columns: and a noble hall it now is. The amount of accumulation is shown by the height of the dust-hill we had to descend, from the alley in front of the temple. Our Rais shut out the children who came swarming after us, as usual; so that, for once, we explored a temple at our ease, in coolness and freedom, and without being asked for bakṣheesh.

If I were to enlarge on anything in regard to this temple, it would be the amount of inscriptions. But it is indescribable,—unrememberable,—incredible anywhere but on the spot. I have already said all that language can say on this point: and I will leave it.

There is a Zodiac here, as every one knows: not ancient. No Zodiac in Egypt is ancient; but one or two offer Egyptian symbols which it is interesting to notice:—the Scarabæus for the Crab: the double-headed Sphinx for the Twins: a truly Egyptian compound of an animal for the Seagoat: and a Man with the oriental water-skin,—the Goat or Kid-skin—on his shoulder, for Aquarius.

I saw here first the Serpents, human-headed and

human-legged, of which we soon met so much more primitive and satisfactory a representation at Thebes. These Serpents and many other nondescripts abound in this temple; so that it looks like an illustration of much of the book of Revelations.—Here, for the first time, I saw the glorious Egyptian symbol of the Heavens;—the Long Arms of the goddess Pe encircling a whole compartment of the vast ceiling.

This 18th of January was remarkable for bringing us again among the dwellings and resorts of a town population, after our retirement and dreamings in the still southern regions. We visited the Pasha's palace, (bringing away some splendid jessamine from his garden) and his cotton factory; and his chained prisoners in the guard-house. All wore chains, which glittered in the sun,—for they were new and bright: and of these, seven had a collar round their necks, and their hands confined in a sort of stocks,—much more clumsy than any handcuffs. These seven were doomed to death;—desperadoes who would be hanged or shot if the Pasha did not reverse their sentence—of which there seemed to be no expectation. They were as lively as the busy passengers in the streets, and cried "baksheesh" as vigorously as any idler in the place. The other prisoners were, we were told, thieves and deserters.

Our stay at Isna for so many hours was for the sake of the crew; that they might bake their bread. This was done before evening; and we proceeded, in order to reach the temple at Arment (the Greek Hermonthis) by the morning. It was a glorious evening; and, after watching the young moon going down just after the sun, there were still some things to be seen on the

western bank. Whatever was on the ridge showed black against the orange sky;—a pacing camel; a string of asses; some children at play, and two or three men at prayers. As they faced the east, every gesture of prostration was seen, and every flow of their majestic garments.—In my childhood, I used to wonder why Pharaoh's kine came up out of the water: but now, and often besides, I saw how truly Egyptian this dream was. The cattle often cross the Nile by swimming,—sometimes resting on a shoal in the middle of the river. This evening, a noble buffalo kept us in a state of interest for half an hour by his incessant efforts to land, and the difficulty he had in doing so. Again and again, he put off, swimming slowly about with only his head above water; and then he would struggle in the tenacious mud, and seem to have obtained a footing; and slip back again, and disappear in the shadow of the bank. Then he would come out again into the light; the failing light, which was almost gone before he was safe. We saw the last shine of it on his sides as he paced slowly up to the ridge, evidently trembling and exhausted. All things in Egypt seem to cross their great highway with as little concern as we do ours. As we walk across a road, they pass through the Nile. Whole droves of cattle, and sometimes asses and sheep; and children, whenever the fancy takes them; and men, with a bundle of millet-stalks under them, or with a log to lean their breasts against;—their clothes, or their burden of produce, on their heads. We never witnessed any sign of fear of crocodiles, or heard of any disasters by them, as far as I remember.

At five in the morning, we were at the nearest point to the Arment temple; and I walked the mile and half which lay between the shore and it with great pleasure, having grass to tread on for the first time for several weeks. There was an air of civilisation about the village which was rather unusual,—the fences being neatly built of millet-stalks, tall and thick, and the place supplied with water from a well-kept pond, fed by a channel from the river. Immediately beyond the village, we entered the Desert, which was all undulating with mounds of broken pottery and other rubbish. The quantity of broken pottery about these places remained a mystery to us to the last. In a hollow among these mounds lie the ruins of the Christian Church, which was itself built, it is thought, from the materials afforded by the larger temple of Hermonthis. These ruins consist of some portions of wall, very massive from the size of the blocks; much strewn stone, and a considerable number of prostrate columns, of red granite. A little further on stand the remaining pillars of Cleopatra's temple; eight altogether, in the area and portico. The remains are miserably obstructed and deformed by the mud partition and huts which have taken shelter under the sculptured walls and painted roofs of the temple: but one is less concerned about it here than in almost any other case; for the edifice is, as I said, of no older time than Cleopatra's. The witch-queen still interests us enough to make us run after every memorial of her. The many who know her only through Shakspere hunt for her portrait-figure at Philœ before they look for Osiris and Isis: and they come here to see the hundred representations

of her, sitting with the little Cæsarion on her knees,—(in honour of whose birth this temple was built,)—or presenting the child to the gods. Nothing can be more distinct than the features of the queen, when seen in the full light, on the outer walls; and they are no doubt to be taken as a portrait, as the edifice was her own work. The face is very charming; the features small, and not at all after the Greek type; and the expression girlish and simple,—like that of the ancient Isis and Athor. We obtain here an impression something like that which we derive from the pictures of Mary Queen of Scots: a conviction of the general resemblance, with no recognition of such extraordinary beauty as we read of, but a sense that the charm might be all that we are told when the soul was at work among those features.

We see how the little Cæsarion is committed to the guardianship, even to the nursing of the god of Hermonthis,—the Amun Ra of Thebes, here presented under the form of the bull Bash, or Basis,—which has characteristics distinguishing it at once to the eye from the bull Apis. In one place we see the bull suckling,—that is, sustaining—the child: and over the principal gate, there is a sculpture of the bull bearing Cæsarion between his horns; while a decorative margin is formed by four copies in small of the same group of Cleopatra with the child on her knees. There is a profusion of ornament throughout the building; but it is of a low style of art;—about, however, to give place to a lower; for this is, of course, the last work of the Ptolemies, who now gave place to the Romans.

CHAPTER XIV.

THEBES.—EUROPEAN TRAVELLERS AND NATIVE ARABS.—THE FAIR.—THE RAMASÉUM.—EL-KURNEH.

At last we were at Thebes,—in the afternoon of this Tuesday, the 19th of January. We were very happy; for there was no hurry. On either hand lay the plain of Thebes; and before us there was leisure to explore it. We staid eight days; giving five to the western bank, and three to the eastern. We made, we thought, good use of our time, exploring daily as much as we could without plunging ourselves into too much fatigue and excitement. What the excitement is can be known only to those who have spent successive days in penetrating the recesses of the palaces, and burying themselves in the tombs of the Pharaohs, who lived among the hundred gates of this metropolis of the world before the Hebrew infant was laid among the nests of the Nile water-fowl. Perhaps some hint of what the interest of Thebes is may be derived from such poor account as I am able to give of what we saw there: but I shall tell only what we saw, and nothing of what we felt. That can be spoken of nowhere but on the spot.

This first evening, we attempted nothing beyond a little stroll on the shore at sunset. The first thing we saw was a throng of boats; five English flags, and one

Russian. Some were just departing: and others went the next day. Thebes is the last place in the world where one wishes for society: so I dare say every party of the whole throng was longing to see all the rest sail away. In the end, we enjoyed as much quietness as we could expect, and suffered no real interruption in our expeditions. After the exchange of sundry greetings with our neighbours, the gentlemen and I walked up to the ruins of the El-Uksur temple, and in and out, and round about, till we arrived at some understanding of their arrangement and object. We now found how much we had gained by practice in looking at temples. This was hardly like the same group of ruins we had visited a few weeks before. By the training of the eye in the intermediate time, we saw new beauty in the proportions,—and especially of the obelisk,—new spirit in the sculptures, and a higher and fresher glory in the colonnades. We were not less but more impressed by the magnitude of the scale of the architecture; and far more impressible by all its other features.

When the moon came up, it was time to be returning to our boat; but as we were turning the corner of the ruins, a man accosted us, with an air of invitation, courteously pointing out a long flight of steps, and saying apparently (but we had no interpreter with us) something about a castle. Mr. E. told me this was, no doubt, the Guard-house; and we agreed to go and see it. Instead of Governor, garrison, or chained prisoners, however, we found an elderly gentleman on his deewán, enjoying his chibouque. He addressed us in French, ordered coffee and pipes, offered now some information about the ruins, and next, his guidance among them

during our stay at Thebes. When he permitted us to depart, at the end of half-an-hour, Mr. E. said to me, "Well now; who is this that we have been seeing?" "Nay," said I, "that is what I thought you were going to tell me." He was certainly no official personage; and certainly he was an European. He proved to be the Signor Castellare whom we had heard of as having settled himself at Thebes, to discover antiquities, and explain them to those who have faith in his interpretation; and to sell specimens to such as have money enough to pay his very high prices for them. It is only by connivance that he does these things; for the Pasha's pleasure is that none of the antiquities shall leave the country. And the connivance is not likely to last long; for the people of the place naturally dislike that a stranger should take out of their hands the traffic with visitors, which they find much more profitable than their inevitable sales to the Signor. Whenever the Signor does anything to prove to the world his sound knowledge on the subject of Egyptian antiquities, every one will be glad of his offered guidance, and of his help, at any price, in securing specimens. In the meantime, perhaps the works of Champollion, Rosellini and Wilkinson, compared with the old classical writings which relate to Egypt, will be found to give guidance enough, while there is seldom any scarcity of illustrative curiosities on the spot.

At midnight, three more boats arrived; and their owners roused the echoes of the whole region, by firing guns, in honour of the English boats on the river. We found the English here generally quite as well pleased with the behaviour of the Arabs as we were. They

found their crews, and also the country people, friendly and helpful,—even affectionate, in all their intercourses. The crews were always willing and cheerful about their work, and honest in their transactions with the strangers. The drawbacks were the incessant begging of the country people; and the noise and childish quarrelling of the crews among themselves. These were troublesome incidents; but not to be complained of by us strangers as injuries. Among the many who were pleased, however, there was one who was always making grievous complaints. Never man was, by his own account, in such incessant and pressing danger of robbery, piracy, and murder, as this gentleman on the Nile. Never did any man so suffer from the perils in which he hourly saw his wife and children. Every Arab he met wanted to rob him: every group on the bank, and every party in a boat was congregated to board and pillage his dahabieh, and murder his family. He showed us a loaded six-barrelled pistol which he usually carried in his hand, as he declared to us, wherever he went; and which he was, he assured us, obliged very frequently to discharge. It did not seem to strike him as strange that all the other English, who went unarmed, and feared nothing, were content with the Arabs,—lost nothing, and met with no alarms. He remained fully convinced of his danger: and this is the reason why I mention his case here. It is the least that European travellers can do in acknowledgment of the security and facilities which the Pasha's government affords them on the Nile, to testify to that security and those facilities; and the testimony is not less due to the kindly Arabs, on whom so much of their comfort has

depended: and if one traveller talks of his dangers and wrongs as this gentleman does, it is necessary to justice that the majority should declare their contrary experience. The worst of it is that one man who has desperate adventures to tell of will make more impression than a dozen whose testimony is that they had no adventures. But this makes it all the more necessary that they should say what they found the state of things. As for myself, I walked much on shore, and was frequently wandering away by myself among the ruins or in the fields: and I had no reason to consider myself imprudent,—except indeed about the dogs. I was incessantly forgetting that Egyptian dogs are dangerous,—being trained to attack strangers. But as soon as the barking began, I found the owners quick and eager in restraining the animals: and usually there was some one of the crew within hearing, armed with a club. I do not remember that I ever met with any rude pressure or threatening but twice, while in Egypt: and then I had put myself in the power of poor creatures who could not resist the temptation of grasping at the chance of a large baksheesh. One time was at Philœ, as I have related. The other was this evening in a hut at the El-Uksur temple, where some women closed the door behind me, and proved themselves to be very sturdy beggars, till disturbed by one of my party coming to look for me. Two instances of bold begging, in ten weeks of constant opportunities, is not much.

As I took a brisk walk along the shore, to warm myself, the next morning, "the Lybian suburb" was dressed in the most wonderful colouring by the early sun. It was in that direction that our researches were

to lie for some days; and as soon as our boat was clear of visitors after breakfast, we crossed the river, and took up our station off the western bank.—Alee was particular in his choice of animals for us to ride, that we might be suited at once for the whole time of our stay on the western side. Mrs. Y. had a horse,—quieter than my donkey. I was favoured with a strong, spirited donkey, whose curator was an active, open-faced, obliging youth, who discovered my wishes and aims with wonderful quickness, and indulged them to the utmost of his power. He presently found out my liking for visiting the Pair: and also for a canter over the plain: and almost every evening, he would point to the Colossi, and nod and smile, and begin a run in that direction, while the rest of the party went straight to the boat. And he ran so well that we generally fell in with my companions before they had dismounted, though I had made a pretty wide circuit. I can never lose the impression of these sunset rides homewards, after the excitements and toils of the day. The Pair, sitting alone amidst the expanse of verdure, with islands of ruins behind them, grew more striking to us every day. To-day, for the first time, we looked up at them from their base. The impression of sublime tranquillity which they convey when seen from distant points, is confirmed by a near approach. There they sit, keeping watch,—hands on knees, gazing straight forward, seeming, though so much of the faces is gone, to be looking over to the monumental piles on the other side of the river, which became gorgeous temples after these throne seats were placed here;—the most immoveable thrones that have ever been established on this earth. He who

is popularly called the Memnon, is sadly shattered. This is the work that Cambyses tried his hand upon overthrowing. With all his efforts, he shattered it only down to the waist. It is built up again; patched up;—a blank rough space only remaining where we would fain see a face. If the faces were of the tranquil, innocent character which marks the old sculptures, and would eminently suit the composure of the attitude, the impression must have been majestic indeed: inviolable to any one but Cambyses. Strabo says that, as he was told, the damage was done by an earthquake. One would like to think that Nature, rather than Man, had done it; and perhaps the inscriptions of ancient visitors, who lay the blame on Cambyses, need not have much weight. But how came the earthquake to leave the mass of the throne and body unhurt, while shattering the shoulders and head? I suppose nobody thinks that the whole was thrown over, and set up again, the fellow colossus remaining uninjured.—The inscriptions are wonderfully numerous; most in Latin; some in Greek.—On the pedestal,—the side of the throne-chair,—is old Nilus, once more busy, as in all times, in binding up the throne of the King with his water-plants. The King is Amunoph III. His name is over the tablet bound up by Nilus; and also on the back of the statue.

These statues sit now, as I have said, in the midst of an expanse of verdure, at the season when travellers visit them. At high Nile, they are islands in the midst of a waste of waters. But of old, their pedestals rose from the pavement of the Dromos or course which formed the avenue to the palace-temple of Amunoph, eleven hundred feet behind the colossi. This palace-

temple, once superb with its statues, columns and sphinxes, is now a mere heap of sandstone;—a little roughness in the plain, when seen from the heights behind. The sphinxes are at St. Petersburgh; the columns are broken off from their bases; the statues peep out in fragments from under the soil. In the days of the glory of Thebes, the Nile did not come here; but the whole avenue, with all its erections, stood on raised ground,—a magnificent sight from the river. The Nile itself has risen since those days; and in proportion to the raising of its bed has been its spread over the plain; so that the pavement of the dromos, and the pedestals of the colossi, have been buried deeper and deeper in mud; and must continue to be so. Sand may be dealt with hereafter, for the rescue of the treasures of Egyptian art; but it does not appear that the mud of the Nile can. How strange it is to look forward to the gradual stifling of these giants,—sitting patiently there for more thousands of years, to be buried, inch by inch, out of human sight! They now stand about fifty-three feet above the soil; and seven feet below it. But the mention of the total height gives less idea of their magnitude than the measurement of the limbs. From the elbow to the fingers' ends, they measure seventeen feet nine inches: and from the knee to the plant of the foot, nineteen feet eight inches.

To-day we saw, for the first time, an old Egyptian palace; that of Ramases the Great, so many of whose monuments we had visited higher up the river. This palace of the Ramaséum (commonly and erroneously called the Memnonium) is also a temple. The old Pharaohs brought their gods into their palaces, and

also had apartments in the temple; so that the great buildings of this metropolis were appropriated to gods and kings jointly. It is melancholy to sit on the piled stones amidst the wreck of this wonderful edifice, where violence inconceivable to us has been used to destroy what art inconceivable to us had erected. What a rebuke to the vanity of succeeding ages is here! What have we been about, to imagine men in those early times childish or barbarous,—to suppose science and civilisation reserved for us of these later ages, when here are works in whose presence it is a task for the imagination to overtake the eyesight!

I went first to the propylon; and it seemed to me, as I clambered about its ruins, that the stones of this outwork alone would build a cathedral. I found an inclined plane and staircase within the propylon, and climbed till I could make my way no further, seeing glimpses between the fallen blocks of the sunny plain and its mountain boundary. Returning, I clambered over the ruins of the mere external face of the propylon; and when I was doubting whether I had ever before performed such a feat of climbing, I found myself, on coming out at the top, still under the portal! What a gateway it must have been! A loosened jamb which slanted over my head made me feel as one might under a falling oak. Looking through, towards the palace, I saw what at once drew my eyes away from the ranges of columns, and perspective of courts and chambers;—the remains of the largest statue that even Egypt ever produced. It is only from a distance that this mass of granite would be perceived to be a statue, so enormous is its bulk. It lies overthrown among the fragments of

its limbs; the fragments themselves being masses which it would not be easy to move. The foot looks like a block preparing for a colossal statue. I had the curiosity to measure the second toe, and found its length from the fork to be two feet seven inches. I climbed upon the pile, walking up the inclined plane of its shoulder, and picking my way on the smooth surface of its neck and the remains of its cheek. Some travellers have obtained a sure footing by setting their feet in the hieroglyphic letters on its back. The features are gone; the greater part of the face being split away for millstones by the Arabs! How such a mass could be overthrown from the base remains a mystery. Every writer seems to conclude that the Persians or Ptolemy Lathyrus effected this kind of ruin throughout Thebes: but I do not know why we may not suppose an earthquake to be the agent. At El Karnac the devastation is such as to defy the belief that human agency could have been employed. Enormous columns are there overthrown from the base in one fall,—their circular stones lying overlapping each other like a row of cheeses: and this without any traces of mines, or other channel for the application of explosives. The mountains of stones also of the great propyla at El Karnac, show plainly that they fell at once; and there are no means known to us, even now, after all our study of gunpowder, which could cause such an overthrow as that at one stroke, and without leaving any traces of the means. —But, supposing this mighty Ramases to have been prostrated by an earthquake, the question remains how he came here from Syene. Whether the working was done here or at Syene, the granite was brought from thence. Sir G. Wilkinson gives its weight as some-

where about 887 tons, 5½ cwt.* How should we now set about quarrying and conveying such a mass some hundreds of miles?

Beyond this statue, which used to sit in the area, beside the entrance to the palace, the building looks like a wood in some petrified region outside our world. The unexpanded lotus is still, to my eye, the most beautiful kind of column: but the full-blown cup is more appropriate perhaps to the larger pillars. I like the eighteen smaller pillars of the great hall here better than the twelve larger. The lighting of this hall is beautiful. The roof in the centre was raised some feet above the lateral roofing; so that large oblong spaces were left for a sight of the blue sky; and when they admitted the slanting rays of the rising and setting sun upon this grove of pillars, and, through them, lighted up the pictured walls, the glory must have been great. Forty-eight pillars supported these roofs;—roofs which were painted starry and blue like the sky. The hall was one hundred feet long. Beyond it extend pillared chambers, in succession and in groups, till we come upon mere traces of their walls and bases of their columns; and at last, out upon the bare rock. Throughout this range of building, the ground rises and the roofs sink, and the walls close in, so that the whole edifice contracts, the door-ways lessening in proportion; and an appearance is given of a longer perspective than exists.

In the sculptures on the walls, the king pays his duty to the gods, and receives privileges from them. The Supreme is here; with the other two who complete the highest triad: and some inferior deities introduce

* Modern Egypt and Thebes, II. 145.

the king into their presence, while the god of letters, Thoth, notes the dates of the royal victories on his palm-branch. Elsewhere, the Supreme presents him with Life and Power: and in the same hall, the Supreme gives him the faulchion and sceptres, ordering him, as the inscription tells us, to smite his foreign enemies with the one, and rule Egypt with the other.* How he obeyed these orders, other pictures and legends tell us. One captive group, whom he holds by the hair, are declared to be "foreign chiefs:" and there are Asiatic and other distant enemies among the vanquished in the battle-pieces, and the names of towns inscribed among the legends, as well as represented in sculptures of storming and sieges. As for his home affairs, we find a procession of twenty-three of his sons, and a group of three daughters. The names of the sons are all inscribed. Elsewhere there is a procession of priests, bearing the figures of the Theban ancestors of the king.† There is an inscription in the great hall, on one of the architraves, describing the valuable and beautiful character of this edifice, and dedicating the sculptures to his father,—the Supreme, who says, "I grant that your edifice shall be as stable as the sky." (Alas! to look round upon it now!) Isis adds, "I grant you long life to govern Egypt."‡ —The next chamber seems, as some of the learned think, to have been the library of the palace. The ceiling bears an astronomical subject; and an inscription, declaratory of the value of the building of this apartment, alludes to the "books of Thoth,"—the god of letters. This primitive Mercury is here attended, as

* Wilkinson's Modern Egypt and Thebes, II. 154. † Ibid. II. 151.
‡ Champollion. Lettres sur l'Egypte.

Champollion records, by a figure with an eye on his head, and surmounted by a legend "Sense of Sight:" the goddess Saf being attended in like manner by a figure with an ear on his head, and labelled "Sense of Hearing:"—(Sôlem.) Champollion interprets these figures as indicators or guardians of the library,—"the books of Thoth." On its walls, the priests bear shrines in procession. But before the king had leisure, and perhaps qualification for thus honouring the gods and himself, he had to gain his fame, add to his dominions, and put down his enemies. On the outer walls, accordingly, we find his adventures, in a wonderful collection of battle-sculptures. What we see are a mere remnant of what existed. The greater number lie in fragments under the mounds of fallen stones: but enough are left to teach us much. The battle-scene on the wall of the area exceeds any representation I ever saw for quantity in a given space. It is barbaric, though including tokens of no mean civilisation. There is the common barbarism of making the conqueror and his equipage gigantic in comparison with all the other figures. He stands in a fine attitude in his flying chariot, his bow in hand (which he draws behind his head) and the reins tied round his waist. Two quivers crossed are at his right hand; and the exterior one is decorated with an extended lion. The king's real lion is visible in the battle too. The conqueror drives over prostrate and bound captives; and men are falling around him in all manner of desperate attitudes.—The siege and river-scenes are very curious;—the scaling-ladder, the shields, the bridges, fosses and towers (labelled "the strong town of Watsch or Batsch,") giving us much insight into the civilisation of the time.

The phalanx of spearmen is capital; their spear-heads being carefully distinguished from the ripple of the little blue river in which such large men are floundering! Then there is the drowned chief whom his people are trying to revive; and the city wall plainly distinguished from the rock on which it is built.—The horses are finely given; and so is the king. Here, as in others of the old sculptures, we come upon what looks like an odd stroke of humour now and then, as in the ass staggering and falling under the weight of a bag of spoil,—meant probably to be thus pointed out as gold. But the humour may be merely in our view of the coalescence of the most literal representation with a method of art which we have been accustomed to consider formal and conventional beyond all other.

The most beautiful point of view for this palace was from about a quarter of a mile to the south where, looking back upon it, its soft-tinted grove of pillars rose behind the copse of dark tamarisks and acacias which intervened. This was happily not our only view of the Ramaséum. It lay in our way from some other objects; and I became quite familiar with it before the week was out.

We visited to-day a very beautiful temple at El-Kurneh; to me the most interesting, on the whole, of any of the edifices at Thebes. It is old; being begun by the father of the great Ramases, in honour of *his* father; and completed by his son in honour of himself. I will abstain from giving any detailed account of it, and merely mention some of its peculiarities.

There were once sphinxes in the dromos, the

remains of which are still traceable. These sphinxes represented king Osirei himself, — conveying the favourite boast of great men of an early time,—their union of intellectual power and physical strength. Then comes a ruined pylon,—once the second; and another dromos which brings us to the beautiful portico; beautiful, though no two pairs of its columns are at the same distance from each other. These ten columns are composed of the stalks of water plants, bound together below the capital, where they expand, and are again gathered in by the abacus. This very ancient Egyptian order gratified me more than any later ones. In a dedication inscription within we find the following declaration of the great Ramases, to whom the Supreme, Amun Ra, here again presents the symbol of Life. "Ramases, the beloved of Amun has dedicated this work to his father Amun Ra, King of gods, having made additions for him to the temple of his father, the king, son of the Sun, Osirei."*— The part of the temple which was dedicated by this Osirei to his father, Ramases I., was finished by the illustrious grandson of the latter, who put in the sculptures. Among these sculptures is one where his grandfather stands behind the gods, bearing the insignia of Osiris, and watching the introduction and homage of his grandson to the gods. The legend over him declares him to be "Ramases deceased, esteemed by the great God, &c. &c." Elsewhere in the same apartment, this king and Osirei, as well as the gods, are receiving the pious offerings of the great Ramases. The faces here are astonishingly preserved; and they

* Wilkinson's Modern Egypt and Thebes, II. 140.

have a full measure of the simplicity and sweetness of the old Egyptian type of countenance. I think there can be no doubt of the elegance of this temple-palace, in comparison with those of later date.

Some barbarians, called Charles and Jane Tilt, have cut and blacked their names and the date of their visit in large on some of the sacred places of this temple. As they have thought fit to publish their own names and adventure in a mischievous manner, they have no right to object to a republication which may be useful in the way of warning to others.

I was delighted to find here many of the prevalent symbolical forms,—here, in this very ancient temple. The boat which we find everywhere had at each end the finest ram's head I had seen. I was pleased to meet with grapes among the offerings. Those which I had seen at Kalâb'sheh with leaves and tendrils, were modern. But here were bunches of undeniable grapes. I saw also the elegant lamp I mentioned before; and the lion-shaped bier. The globe and asps were on the cornices: and the ceiling of the portal was beautiful;—cartouches and stars, on a blue ground.

These were our studies during our first day at Thebes. These palaces, built for the busy and illustrious living, were to us like tombs; for there was a spirit of death within and around them all. Not only the inmates had passed away; but the deeds, the modes of life, the objects of reverence, pride and desire. But to-morrow we were to penetrate deeper into the region of the dead. We were to explore some of the wonders of the Death valley of Thebes.

CHAPTER XV.

THEBES.—OLD EGYPTIAN VIEWS OF DEATH AND HEREAFTER.—THE PRIESTS.—INTERMENTS.—TOMB OF OSIREI.

THE most striking thing at Thebes is perhaps the evidence on every hand of the importance to the old Egyptian mind of the state of the dead. To the philosopher there is nothing surprising in this; for he knows that it must be so to an infant race, inexperienced in the history of man, and unlearned as to the powers of the human mind, and the relative value of its aims. Everywhere the mind of man is active, unsatisfied, and aspiring; and while he knows so little of the world he lives in, and the companions beside him, and the unseen region of ideas which lies about him as infantine nations do, he is impelled to refer his activity and his desires to the future which he supposes to contain what he at present wants and cannot find. It is with puerile man as it is with the child who is never satisfied with the present, but always stretching forward into the unknown future,—not knowing the value of what is under his hand, but neglecting it in dreams of what he shall have and do in some desirable state by and by. The aspiration is instinctive, and therefore right: but as yet unenlightened and undisciplined. As

he grows up, the present becomes more to him, and the future less. In proportion as he becomes truly wise, he discovers that in the present scene and moment lies more than his best industry can understand and his best powers achieve. He brings home his faculties; and finds in the present enough to occupy them all, and to fill his life completely full of interest, activity, and advancement. It is only a child, grown or ungrown,—an ignorant and undisciplined child,—who would weep for more worlds to conquer: and he is the wisest man who knows that he has always many unexplored and ungoverned worlds on his hands which should leave him no leisure for looking forward into a future which he cannot penetrate. It is with races of men as with individuals. Not knowing yet how to employ their aspirations and desires on the unfathomable and inexhaustible universe in which they are placed; not knowing how adequate their existing human powers are, if fully exercised, to their present human work; not knowing how exact is the momentary retribution of fidelity or unfaithfulness to their powers and their work, they are perpetually referring to the future for a wider scene, for new powers, and for arbitrary reward and punishment. There is nothing blameworthy or despicable in this. On the contrary, the tendency comes in happily to lift men over their infantine age of inexperience, as the child is ennobled by the forecast of his hopes before he can be yet more ennobled by the wisdom of his self-knowledge. And every working of instinct, every direction of natural aspiration is to be revered in its proper place and at its proper time. We truly respect, accordingly, the child's

or the peasant's notion of a literal judgment day, when there will be a process of trial, with books of account opened, and a sentence passed in words, and burning inflicted in the one case, and whatever the individual most desires conferred on the other. We truly respect these notions in the child and the peasant, while we know that no enlightened and disciplined man looks forward to any such actual scene. And the enlightened and disciplined man knows that while he continually thinks less of the future, as the inestimable present of life and duty opens before his contemplation and his industry, his hold of that inestimable present will appear weak and careless to a wiser than he who will come after him. Thus must we, who look back some little way, and from some small height, upon the track of ages, regard with serious respect, the engrossing attention that infantine nations gave to death and the state of the dead; the records they have left of their puerile pride, ambition and violence proving that, at the same time, they were but little aware of the value of what they held in the present life, with all its duties, its spiritual powers and privileges. As I said before, the most striking thing at Thebes is the evidence on every hand of the importance to the old Egyptian mind of the state of the dead: and these evidences will be regarded by the philosopher with the solemn reverence which the wise cannot but feel towards every form in which Faith, the noblest of human faculties, manifests itself. The literal truth of the objects of faith, when those objects are the highest that can be conceived, is a small matter: the exercise of the faculty is every thing: and though the imagery

of the Egyptian tombs is to us only imagery, while to their inmates it was anticipated fact, we may, in our sympathy with their mood of faith, enter those tombs with an awe perhaps as strong as theirs.

When the Pharaohs built their palaces and temples, they had more aims than one to fulfil. They blazoned their own deeds upon them; but they glorified the deeds of their fathers, even more carefully than their own: and they must have had in view the sympathy and edification of other men, living and to live. But their careful choice and elaborate preparation of their tombs, with every possible resort in the adornment of them, show us that the unseen state was the most interesting subject, and that of the firmest faith to them. The Pharaohs were wont to devote the early years of their reigns to royal deeds of rule and conquest: and they did not begin to build their palaces and temples till they had achieved deeds with which to glorify them, and brought home captives to do the work of building them. But it was quite otherwise with their tombs. Every man who could afford himself a tomb began its preparation early in life. A palace or temple could be carried on to completion by a successor: but a tomb was sealed up when the owner was laid in it. It could not therefore, under the uncertainty of life, be too soon begun; and their practice seems to show that it could not be too long elaborated. Few or none appear to be finished in every part; and some were in progress through a long course of years.

The most prominent idea presented to us in these tombs is that their makers considered them to be really and truly an abode;—literally "a long home;" or, as

they called them, "everlasting habitations;" and to be prepared and provided accordingly.—The way to the long home of the Theban Kings is very appropriate and most impressive; a succession of winding defiles between grand but most desolate rocks, the recesses of which might seem to invite the candidate for death to come and rest here in the depth of silence, till his thousands of years of suspense should be fulfilled:—to rest in silence, but not in solitude: not in the solitude of the wide desert; but in the still congregation of this deep valley.

To the old Egyptians, as to all who are heedless of the unborn human race in interest for those who have lived, the true congregation of the human race must always have been looked for beyond the grave,—so immeasurably must the dead ever outnumber existing men. Every man must have felt himself one of a very small company in comparison with that which he was to join. But the case of the kings was strong indeed. Each one of them lived solitary; and it was only when he died that he could enter among his peers. He went from the solitude of that busy, peopled plain to the sanctified society of the Valley of Death. To him, this was the great event to which, as we see, he was looking forward during the best years of his life; and he devoted his wealth, his thoughts, and the most sacred desires of his heart to preparation for his promotion to the society of kings, and the presence of the gods. There, an abode would be prepared for him. On the walls of his tomb he attempted to paint the succession of mansions in the great heavenly house which he was to inhabit at last: but meanwhile, he was to dwell, for

a vast length of time, in the long home in the valley, where his peers were lying still (whether asleep or vigilant) all round about him.

How fit and impressive is the choice of this site for the metropolis of the dead can be conceived of only by contrasting it with that of the metropolis of the living. Both might be viewed at once from the mountain ridges behind western Thebes. There is a ridge where strangers are taken now, to overlook the plain; and glorious is the view: but to-day I went much higher still, to a peak whence I could see quite down into the Valley of the Tombs, and over every recess of the vivid green plain,—every nook which lay between the Arabian and Lybian hills. I chose to see it as it once was. I made myself three thousand years old, and saw from my perch what was worth looking at. Great as are the existing marvels of Thebes, they are, from this height, mere indications of the presence of man. Sprinkled over the expanse of verdure, one notices a few heaps of stones,—the temples and palaces; and a pair of sentinels,—the Colossi: and across the blue and brimming river, a little cobweb railing, which is El-Uksur; and a group of massive towers,—which is El-Karnac. This, with all its soft freshness of colouring, all its African brightness, is too sad and dreary to dwell on. It is better to see it with the eyes of three thousand years ago.

There lies the city below, filling up all the plain, except where there is a girdle of fields. It is those gardens and groves among the houses which make it cover so large a space; for there never was, in this world, such a collection of houses as would cover this

plain. How the gardens spread, not only round the palaces, but behind the ranges of dwellings which we should call streets! How their ponds gleam on the eye, and their clusters of palms overshadow their lawns, and intervene between the eye and the flat house-roofs! I can distinguish the children pushing out from among the reeds in this nearer garden, in their little papyrus boat of nautilus shape.—How finely the city ramifies,—with no circuit wall, but temple ranges running out in all directions! That advanced post of temples at intervals is a sufficient defence, if any foe should dare to come. They are perfect fortifications; and the watchmen on the summits of the propyla command the valley in both directions, as far as the irregular hill boundary admits. What masses these are,—these four which command the plain! El-Karnac and El-Uksur over yonder, and the Ramaséum and Medeenet Haboo below me! How they stand, as if each calling to the other! How each stretches out its dromos, and plants its files of sphinxes, or its pair of colossal sentinels, as if to proclaim "here lives a king, or the glory of a king!" Far over yonder, in the avenue between El-Karnac and El-Uksur, I see some movement;—surely it is the floating of pennons, and the carrying of standards. If it crosses the river, I may see what it means. Meantime, how gay is the blue winding Nile, with its heavy, slow-moving boats,—the gay chequered sails up, and the row of long oars glancing in the sun! How pretty are those villas scattered about the edge of the desert, each with its plot of garden or field sloping down into the fertile region of the plain; each with its canopy of shady palms; and every palm swaying

in the same light breeze which fills the sails on the river, and floats the pennons of that multitude in the avenues of El-Karnac! Here is a multitude below me too. The women are exchanging their goods in the areas of the streets,—bargaining slowly, it seems, because, having no coin, they have to settle the worth of their valuables before they can agree on that of their produce. And those men,—how they are toiling about that sledge,—advancing it by hair's-breadths under its load of granite; a mass as large as any merchant's house in the city! What a team of harnessed men, straining at the load! By their light complexions, they are Asiatic captives. They are helping to build yonder palace, on whose walls their captivity is to be commemorated.—The wind strengthens, and brings up some sounds which tell what a multitude is stirring below. Through the hum and buzz there comes the shock of the mallet falling on the wedge in the quarry, and the lowing of the cattle on the farm at the edge of the plain below. And was not that a breath of music? Yes: the blast of a distant trumpet, and some shrill pipe tones. Ah! it is from that concourse over the water. How the multitude comes sweeping down to the river's brink! Surely that crowd of boats is going to bring them over. Yes; there is the funereal boat for the transport of the dead; and those others are making a bridge for the passage of the living. What a train they will be, winding through the defiles of that death region on my left hand! How still it is at this moment! Nothing there but the shadows thrown into the hollows! No sound but of the flapping of

the wings of yonder eagle; for the wild dog is quiet till night. What a contrast is that parched, silent, desolate valley to this gay and stirring plain; and how complete, to those on either side, is the barrier of these rocky hills which I, from my perch, can overlook! To-day, as yonder funeral train winds through it, the echoes of the valley of death will be awakened, and they will answer to notes of wailing, or shouts of boasting; and its hot mounds will be alive with shadows: but to-morrow, the two regions which are separated but by a partition of rock, will be once more opposed as activity to oblivion, and Life to Death.

As it appeared to me from that pinnacle, it appeared daily when I rode through the Defiles of the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings. I felt that there was never a nobler seat for a metropolis of the living than the plain of Thebes, and never a nobler approach than by these ravines from the city of the living to the kingdom of the dead.

Every Egyptian king was, as I have said, a priest. He might be chosen out of the Second Caste,—the Military: but he must become a priest before he could assume the sovereignty. It was a sufficient reason for this that the king must always thus be an instructed person, and in fellowship with the high class who held all the dignities and privileges of knowledge and sacred office: but there was another reason. The sovereign in Egypt was assisted in his government by a council of priests: and of course it was necessary for him to hold, in common with his advisers, that knowledge and those secrets of Custom by which the nation was governed. Before looking at their most interesting

existing work, it may be well to form in our minds some slight picture of this remarkable order of men.

Herodotus gives us information of their personal habits, which were carefully arranged with a view to their perfection as models before the eyes of the people. We all know how much more necessary, and how much more difficult extreme cleanliness is in Egypt than elsewhere. The priests shaved their heads; and their whole bodies were shaved every three days, that, as Herodotus says, there might not, by possibility, be any vermin or soil on those who served the gods.* Twice by day, and twice by night, they washed in cold water: and they wore no other clothing than a dress of linen, and shoes of papyrus. They were daily served with the sacred meats of the temples, ready cooked; but from some articles of food, as fish, they abstained; and were compelled to be very moderate in the use of wine. The food they abstained from seems to have been such as tended to produce leprous and other eruptive diseases. They had an extreme and mysterious horror of beans; never permitting them to be sown in Egypt, or touched when found growing wild. Whatever were their reasons were probably those of Pythagoras in warning his disciples against touching beans. Some have supposed (after a hint in Aristotle) that Pythagoras meant to warn his pupils against political action,—the ballot vote being given by a bean: but as the philosopher derived so much else from Egypt, and as we know the strength of the reprobation of beans there, we need only suppose him to have been

* Herod. II. 37.

more aware of the priestly reasons for that reprobation than we are.

It need scarcely be pointed out that much more was included in the class of sacred things among ancient nations (as among modern half-civilised ones) than with us. Legislation, Geometry, Medicine, every science was a sacred study among the Egyptians, and engrossed by the priests; as was the whole of their religious philosophy. They made laws which they enforced without rendering any reason, holding that the people had "nothing to do with the laws but to obey them." They explored many regions of natural science, giving the people the results in the form of divination and magic. They held among themselves the doctrines of the unity of God, and of a divine moral government, and lowered their doctrine to meet the comprehension of the people, by deifying the attributes of God, and making local rulers of them. The testimony of ages has proved the vice of this method of proceeding: but we must remember that the Egyptian priesthood had not this testimony of ages. We must remember how they stood, a little band of observers, among the wonders and mysteries of the universe; and that, as yet, they had to collect the facts of external nature to a great extent before they could look far into causes (so-called); and that these facts were not regarded by them with the calm eye of knowledge, but the bashful glance of new and awe-struck perception. They could hardly receive such knowledge as they had otherwise than as a special gift and revelation to themselves, as students of the universe. It was not known then, not dreamed of by any one,

that knowledge is the equal birthright of all, and that truth is of the last importance to every human being. We are not therefore to reprobate in the Egyptian priesthood what is worthy of reprobation now in any man or body of men;—a distrust of the general understanding, as compared with our own; a keeping back of the knowledge which is the birthright of all; an offer, under veils and disguises, of that truth which every man has an equal right to see in its native purity and nobleness. The Egyptian priesthood tried the experiment of a civil government which was probably the fittest at the time for its purposes—those purposes being, we may hope, centred in the good of the people:—Pythagoras, at least, thus understood the matter. The experiment, which lay within the terms of natural laws, appears to have succeeded; the Egyptian mode of governing society by a council of the wisest and best having lasted longer than perhaps any other government that nations have experienced. The Egyptian priesthood tried another experiment, which failed, because it violated the terms of natural laws. They tried the experiment of making themselves gods to the people in regard to the administration of knowledge and natural benefits. They took upon themselves to measure and to manage the minds of men in regard to matters which in fact they held only in common with all men. They did this, I doubt not, in all sincerity, fidelity, and benevolence; but it was a mistake of ignorance; and it was followed by its natural retribution. Ignorance, whether guilty or unavoidable, is always presumptuous. These priests were ignorant and presumptuous, while most earnestly intent on doing good

with such knowledge as they had. They assumed the exclusive possession of that to which all had a right; and they corrupted themselves and their charge together. The philosophy they held languished and nearly died out. Their own order deteriorated in power, knowledge, and character; and the people became idolaters, sinking into that weakness and under that doom which superstition brings on as surely as the pollution of the atmosphere causes lassitude and lingering death. The experiment of spiritual government failed; but we are not to deal with the priests for it as if they had had our thousands of years of added experience.

I never believed during my school days, and I am sure I never shall now, that any order of men ever carried on a wilful and deliberate fraud, from generation to generation, for any purpose whatever. I used to suspect in my school days, as I believe now, that all the heathen priesthoods which were held up for my scorn as bands of impostors, had faith, one way or another, in what they taught. And there seems every reason to believe this now of the Egyptian priesthood, who taught more extraordinary things perhaps than any other. If we do but put ourselves in their places for an instant, we may perhaps see how many things may have been venerable and true to them, which we, with our knowledge and our ignorance, our experience and our prejudices, do not know how to treat seriously at all.

To them, nothing was so wonderful, so mysterious, so important as Life and Organisation. Their purity of life and habits,—their taking but one wife, and banishing all indecency from their temple rites,—enlightens us as to much that we might reprobate otherwise in the

illustrations of some of their festivals, and a few of their doctrines. Perhaps they were wiser than we are in their reverence for natural instincts; and they were certainly not wrong in thinking life and its production the most sacred and the most real, and therefore the most important fact with which the human race can have concern. When they by degrees led the people down into gross brute-worship (if indeed it is true that they did so) they certainly misapplied or ill-conveyed their reverent appreciation of the great fact of life; but the fault was in the misapplication, and not in the philosophy which recognised in life, wherever found, something altogether sacred, before which the human intellect must bow down, as an insoluble mystery. I am sure that we are wrong in the other extreme, in the levity or utter thoughtlessness with which we regard the races of inferior animals, which have shared with ours, for thousands of years, the yet unsolved mystery of sentient existence, without sharing with us any thing else than what is necessary for the support of that existence. We know no more of the experience, one may say, the mind, of the cattle, the swallows, the butterflies, and worms about us than if they lived in another planet. They and man have met hourly for all these thousands of years without having found any means of communication; without having done anything to bridge over the gulf which so separates them that they appear mere phantoms to each other. The old Egyptian priests recognised the difficulty, and made a mistake upon it;—disastrous enough. We, for the most part, commit the other great mistake of not recognising the mystery. We are not likely ever to embody our consciousness of it in

any form of brute worship; but we are hardly qualified to criticise those who fell into that perhaps sublime error in the early days of human speculation.

Then again; about their Oracles, Magic, and Medicine;—it is needless and therefore unjust, to attribute to them any artifice or insincerity. All who have duly inquired into that class of natural facts know that among human faculties exist those of perception or apprehension of distant and of future events; and some powers of sympathetic operation, whose nature and limits are as yet but little understood. Those powers are as yet but too little inquired into, notwithstanding the example and exhortations of Bacon, Cuvier, Laplace, and other philosophers who were rendered by their philosophy meek enough to learn from nature. Finding, as we do, indisputable proofs that at present the human being is capable of various states of consciousness, and of knowing events which are happening afar, and of foreknowing events which are future,—sometimes spontaneously, and sometimes by means of an agency purposely employed;—knowing, on the other hand, that history abounds with records which everybody believes more or less, of prophecy, of preternatural (so-called) knowledge, of witchcraft, unaccountable sympathies, and miraculous cures; we have every reason to suppose that the Egyptian priesthood encountered and held the facts which some of us encounter and hold, and employed them as sincerely and devoutly as they employed other facts in natural philosophy. It is probable that the oracles were true: and we have no right to doubt that the priests believed them true,—as earnestly as they believed that they could cure the sick whom they carried

into their temples, and on whose heads they religiously laid their hands, with invocations to the gods. The faculties which drew the attention of Bacon and others are found more vigorous, more spontaneous, and more easily excitable among orientals than among ourselves. If we find, by the half-dozen, merely by opening our minds to the fact, cases of far-seeing, and fore-seeing, and curative power, it is probable that such cases were familiar to the heathen priesthoods of old; and that they sincerely believed that persons so gifted held a revealing commission from the gods. While fully aware of the means necessary for eliciting the faculty, and using those means, the priest might wait on the speech of the oracular somnambule, believing it to proceed from the veritable inspiration of the god. This is not the place for bringing together the evidence that exists about the dealings of the Egyptian priests with the sick and infirm: but it is curious; and it shows no cause for the assumption that they were jugglers, or in any way insincere in their practice. They probably believed that they should give relief by the "touching with the hands" which, as Solon tells us, "will immediately restore to health" when soothing medicines are of no avail; and by that "stroking with gentle hands" which Æschylus says was to be had on the Nile:* and they were probably justified in their belief by the results. Nothing but a very large proportion of cures will account for the continued celebrity of any seat of health during a sequence of many centuries.

* Prometheus to Io: "There Zeus will render you sane, stroking you with gentle hand and simply touching you." This sanctuary at Canopus was celebrated for the cures wrought by the god,

As to the oracles, there were many in Egypt; and they were famous from the earliest times of which we have any record. The two most celebrated were those of Amun Ra, in the Oasis of Amun; and that of Buto in the city of that name.* Herodotus tells a curious story of the establishment of the Oracles of Amun Ra and of Dodona.† He heard two versions;—one from the priests of Amun at Thebes; the other from the priestesses of the oracle at Dodona. The Greek priestesses told him that two black doves were carried off from Thebes; one of which went into the Lybian Desert, and the other came to Dodona, perched on an oak, and spoke, saying that it was the will of the king of the gods that he should have an oracle there. The dove which flew to the Lybian oasis delivered a similar command there from Amun Ra. The story of the Theban priests to Herodotus was that two women, sacred to the god, were carried off from Thebes by the Phœnicians, and set up oracles at the Oasis and at Dodona. They were probably carried off for the sake of that power of prevision which had caused their consecration at Thebes, and which they exercised afterwards at the two new oracular seats. Herodotus says expressly that there were no priestesses in Egypt:‡ yet it is certain that women of the priestly caste were, in one way or another, employed and consecrated about the temples; and in all purity and honour. They were probably the utterers of the oracle; and might be also the dispensers of health in the sanctuaries. Among so large a body as that of the Egyptian priesthood, it is probable that there was never any want of somnambules,

* Herod. II. 33. † Herod. II. 54, 55. ‡ Herod. II. 35.

who would be looked upon as chosen by the god of the region to deliver his oracles; and who would do it, while the faculty worked clearly (which we now find to be rarely for any long time;) and without any need of jugglery at the time, or occasion to suspect it now. Diodorus Siculus tells us of a daughter of Sesostris who seems to have had the faculty as eminently as Joan of Arc, exercising it with regard to her father's victories as Joan did about her own. Her father, being king, was also High-priest, and must have known how far to trust his daughter's divination: and he planned his proceedings, and prepared for his conquests, under her direction.* Herodotus observes that this Theban oracle and that of Dodona are much like each other:† that the art of foretelling future events, as practised in the Greek temples, was derived from Egypt: and that it is certain that the Egyptians were the first of the human race who established feasts and public assemblies, processions, and the manner of approaching God and holding intercourse with him: and that the Greeks had borrowed these customs from the Egyptians.

Every god had, as Herodotus tells us, a high-priest and several other priests; each of whom is succeeded on his death by his son.‡ The principle of their sacrifices was to offer to the gods what was hostile or unacceptable to them; so that the sacrifice, while a sign of homage, was so through an act of vindictiveness. The animals offered were usually those in which a wicked soul was, or might be supposed to be, residing at the time. They laid hands on the head of the

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, I. 261.

† Herod. II. 58. ‡ Herod. II. 37.

victim, charged it with maledictions,* and then got rid of it as fast as possible. If there were Greeks at market, the head was sold to them: if not, it was thrown into the river. The bull Apis was, as everybody knows, black, with white marks; the star on the forehead being the sign of its being an incarnation of the deity.† The bullocks offered in sacrifice were red, because Typho was supposed to be of that complexion: and if the priests found a single hair on the animal which was not red, they rejected it.‡

One of the sacred traditions of Egypt was that Isis had given one-third of the land to the priests, on condition of perpetual honours being paid to Osiris after his death. We know how Joseph left the priests' lands in their possession when he bought up all the rest of the land of Egypt: and when, after the famine, he decreed that the king should have a fifth part of the produce, he excepted the lands of the priests from the impost.§ The personal wants of the priests were all supplied from the temples: and thus they were entirely free from the cares of life. For one item of property they had the Tombs: and their monopoly of a property in such constant request must have been very profitable.

It appears that there was a lake made near every capital city in Egypt,‖ for the transit of the dead; and a sacred boat, to bear the hearse; and a boatman whose

* Herod. II. 39.

† Herodotus says (III. 28,). "The Egyptians say that a flash of lightning descends from heaven upon her" (the cow-mother of Apis) "and that from this ray she conceives the god Apis."

‡ Herod. II. 38. Genesis, XLVII. 22, 26.

‖ Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, V. 420.

official name, written in Greek, was Charon.* The funeral train were obliged to pass over this lake on the way to the tomb; but they might return by land. The purpose of the obligatory custom of crossing the lake was that all the dead might pass through the same ordeal before admission to their "eternal habitation," as the priests called the tomb. This ordeal was judgment by the forty-two † assessors who, on earth, performed the first stage of the work which was to be completed by the forty-two heavenly assessors, who awaited the dead within the threshold of the unseen world. Notice was given to these judges of the day of the funeral; and they stood in a half circle on the nearer shore of the lake, awaiting the arrival of the funeral train. Any person might accuse the deceased in their presence of any immoral act. If the accusation was proved, the deceased was not allowed to pass. If the accuser could not substantiate his story, he was severely punished. Even kings ‡ have been known to be turned back from the place of embarkation, when acts of injustice have been proved against them: and it appears that priests had no more exemption than others from this ordeal. Those of the rejected dead who had left a family behind them were carried home, and their mummy-cases set upright against the wall of some chamber; a perpetual spectacle of shame and grief to their families, who suffered acutely from the disgrace of what had happened. Those who were poor and friendless, as well as vicious, were put into the ground where the rejection took place; and this was the shore where

* Diodorus, I. 92. † According to Champollion.
‡ Diodorus, I. 72.

their melancholy ghosts wandered, if poets say true, pining for the Elysian fields which lay beyond; those Elysian fields * being the beautiful meadows which, in the principal burial-place of the Nile valley, at Memphis, extended beyond the lake of the Dead, all flowery with lotus and blossoming reeds.

Besides persons convicted of criminal acts, debtors were excluded from burial.† A creditor might possess himself of the mummy till the family had satisfied his claims; and the priests could refuse a tomb till it could be paid for. It became the ambition of the family of a debtor to furnish forth, sooner or later, a grand funeral, which, as the liabilities of the deceased must be first discharged, was in fact a restoration of the family honour.—In some cases of strong conjugal affection, the survivor retained at home the body of the departed, that both might be carried to the tomb together: but in such cases, it was always understood that a respectable funeral was in reserve.

The priests kept a number of tombs always ready,—probably covered with the ordinary kinds of paintings, and finished, except in the blank spaces left for the name and titles and character of the occupant. It is

* Diodorus, I. 96.

† According to Herodotus (II. 136) this was a very old arrangement, dating from a law of Asychis, who, early in the First Period, built the Brick Pyramid. "Under his reign, as commerce suffered from a scarcity of money, he published, the priests say, a law which forbade borrowing except on condition of the body of the borrower's father being given in pledge. It was added to this law that the creditor should also have in his power the burial of the debtor; and that if he refused to pay the debt for which he had deposited a pledge so precious, he could not, after his death, be laid in the tomb of his fathers, nor in any other; and that he could not, after the death of any of his own family, render them this honour."

certain that services for the dead and offerings to them were celebrated at times long after the funeral; and it is thought probable that in cases where a new name is put over the old one, and a different family has clearly come into possession of the place, there may have been a discontinuance of the payments and offerings given for services for the deceased, and the priests have let the tomb for a second-hand place of burial.* Kings and wealthy families no doubt purchased the site, or the excavated chambers, and adorned them according to their own taste; often beginning the work in early manhood, as I have mentioned before, and carrying it on till the day of death.

When I speak of the services and offerings to the dead, it does not follow that these were presented within the tomb. The tomb appears to have been closed and sealed at once. But small altars, sculptured with offerings, have, in so many instances, been found before the entrances of tombs,† that we may suppose the rites to have been celebrated there.

After permission to pass on had been given by the judges, an eulogy on the deceased, and a prayer to the gods for his welfare in Hades, were read by one of the officiating priests; and Charon proceeded in his ferrying. When the opposite shore was reached, and the procession landed, the ground was sprinkled before the wheels of the funeral car; and sometimes palm-branches were strewn in the way.‡ The body was sometimes crowned with amaranth or other everlastings, or with bay-leaves, or fresh flowers.§

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, V. 334.
† Ibid. V. 387.
‡ Ibid. V. 421.
§ Ibid. V. 423.

There was much display of sorrow. In the paintings of funereal rites, we always see mourners throwing dust on their heads, beating themselves, and evidently uttering cries.—In ordinary cases, the body was laid in one of the pits or recesses in the tomb: but in the case of kings and great men, we know that there was a sarcophagus in a chamber appropriated to it.

Thus much before the sealing up of the tomb. What afterwards?

As he had passed the external judgment, he was believed by the mourners without to be assured of re-union, in his immortal essence, with the Supreme, from whom all being emanates. The family have likened him, in the preparation of his body, to Osiris, and have painted the emblems of Osiris on his envelope; and will henceforth call him by that sacred name. The offerings they bring, and will continue to bring occasionally, are not consecrated to their mortal comrade, but to the portion of divinity which dwelt in him.—They place behind their altar of offerings the images of Isis and Nepthys, the First and the Last: and believe that the First and the Last attend at the head and feet of the body, as long as it remains in the tomb.* They think of him as finding his way in the untried regions which they yet seem to themselves to know so familiarly. He leaves behind him the eulogy which is inscribed on the entrance wall of his tomb, and is met by Thoth, the Conductor of the dead, by whom he is fetched away, and led on to a more fearful judgment than that man's judgment by the shore of the lake which he has passed with honour. He is announced, according to his legend,

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, V. 416.

thus: "Arrival of a soul in Amenti." His secret faults, and his sins of omission, of which men could be no judges, are now to come under review: and Thoth, whose legend* declares him "the Secretary of Justice of the other great gods," is to produce his book, in which he has recorded the whole moral life of the soul come to judgment.—The forty-two heavenly assessors are believed to represent the forty-two sins which the Egyptians believed man to be subject to. Each searched the newly-arrived soul, and declared its condition in respect to the particular sin.† Then came the trial of the balance. The symbol of the actions of the candidate are placed in one scale, and the symbol of integrity in the other. Thoth looks on, ready to record. Horus holds the hand of the candidate; and the dog ‡ watches the process, ready to turn on the condemned if his scale should be "found wanting." If all is well, he advances in front of the balance, and finds the infant Horus seated on his lotus-blossom before the throne; and on the throne is the Judge, prepared to welcome him by raising the end of his sceptre, and to permit him to enter among the gods within. Of the happy state little was revealed, because, as it was declared, "the heart of man could not conceive of it." Almost the only particular declared was that there was a tree of Life, § on

* Champollion. Lettres sur l'Egypte.

† Mischief. Blasphemy. Idleness. Stealing divine goods. Lying. Libertinism. Impurity. Scepticism ("head-shaking at the words of truth.") Long-speechifying. Need for remorse. Gluttony.—Here are some of the forty-two sins read off by Champollion from the Legends. Lettres sur l'Egypte.

‡ If any one wishes to know the name of the Egyptian Cerberus, I can indulge him with it,—citing Champollion. The name is Teôuôm-enement.

§ The Persea.

whose fruit the gods wrote the names of mortals destined to immortality, and whose fruit made those who ate of it to be as gods. His relatives thought of him as wearing on his head, as a mark of his justification, the feather of integrity: and they wrote beside his name, from that time forward, the name of the goddess of Justice; a practice equivalent to that of affixing the epithet "justified" to his name. This goddess of Justice, Thmei, is present during the trial of the soul: and she is identified in the sculptures by her legend "Thmei, who lives in Amenti, where she weighs hearts in the balance;—no sinner escapes her." *

The survivors of any one for whom a burial has been obtained, but who might be suspected of unfitness for the heavenly mansions, were enabled to form but too clear an idea of his fate; for the pains of the wicked could be conceived of by human imagination, though the immortal pleasures of the just could not. The purgatory of the Egyptians was in fact described definitely enough: and the representations of it in the tombs give a strange sensation to the gazer before he has become accustomed to them. At the extreme end of a large tomb at Thebes,† I saw some marks on the black and stained wall which made me hold my candle nearer, and persevere till I had made out the whole sculpture, which gave me at last the impression of a bad dream. A hopeless-looking pig, with a bristling back, was in a boat, the stern of which was towards the heavenly regions. Two monkeys were with it, one at the bow, and the other whipping or driving the pig.

* Champollion. Lettres sur l'Egypte.

† Bruce's, or the Harper's.

This was a wicked soul, sent back to earth under the conduct of the agents of Thoth. The busy and gleeful look of the monkeys, and the humbled aspect of the pig were powerfully given. This was the lowest state of the punished soul; but it would have to pass through some very mournful ones, and for a very long time,—to be probably a wolf, a scorpion, or a kite, or some other odious creature, in weary succession,—for a term of from three thousand to ten thousand years. This was called passing through its "orbit of necessity."

We now know enough of the outward state, and of the views and expectations of a Pharaoh, to understand the illustrations of his tomb. He was a priest, and therefore informed of the secret speculations of the wise upon the nature of the Divine Government and the destiny of man. On account of both his civil and his ecclesiastical rank, he was compelled to blazon forth his deeds and his expectations in great pomp. He has been laid in the chambers of the tomb with every funereal observance; and he has left on those walls illustrations of his faith which the vulgar may take literally, or let alone as unintelligible, while to priestly eyes they once told more than we shall now ever understand; and through those of a Pythagoras spread a philosophy through the world, so lofty as to command the praise at once of heathen, Jew and Christian. Here, where the common eye, then as now, could see only a household of gods and nothing higher, Pythagoras could see, through these transparent shows of attributes, that there was, because there must be, some vital centre, from whence they derived their

existence. While the vulgar saw only in the fate of the damned "the circle of necessity," he saw it everywhere, believing that the agency of the central unity was operative wholly through numbers,—which are another name for certainty. Where others saw painted the array of the Hours, he perceived between each two the chain of Cause and Effect. Where others saw altar flames, he recognised the aspirations of the intellect. Where others shrank from pictures of torture and dismemberment, he calmly studied the conflicts of the intellect and soul. Where others saw a range of mummy closets with folding doors, he gained ideas of that succession of spheres through which the aspiring spirit has to pass, before attaining the vital centre from which it came forth, and to which it may, when worthy, return. Where the vulgar saw—what the priests told them to see—"an eternal abode," to which the dead king had come from "the inn" of his own palace,*—he knew that here the dust would, sooner or later, return to dust, while the spirit had returned to Him who had given it forth. Josephus says that Pythagoras was the most eminent of the heathens for wisdom and piety; and believes that he would have spoken more wisely still on the highest matters, if he had been safe from the malice of the ignorant.—The testimony of Herodotus is this:† "These people," the Egyptians, "are the first who have advanced the doctrine that the soul of man is immortal: that, when the body is dead, the soul enters always into that of some animal; and that having thus passed successively into all kinds of terrestrial, aquatic and aerial creatures, it

* Diodorus, I. 51. † Herod. II. 123.

returns into a human body, during its act of birth: and that these different transmigrations take place in the space of three thousand years. I know that some Greeks have adopted this opinion,—some sooner, and some later; and that they have made use of it as they thought proper. Their names are not unknown to me; but I preserve silence upon them."

If this old traveller, at once so reserved and so garrulous, had spoken out here, the first name doubtless, which he would have uttered, would have been Pythagoras.

Among the many tombs open to us, we may choose one for a regular, however brief, examination. And the most attractive, without question, to any reader whose interest in the subject has carried him through this chapter, will be that discovered by Belzoni, about a quarter of a century ago, whose occupant was Osirei, father of Ramases the Great.

The neighbouring peasants observed, about the beginning of the present century, a sinking of the soil in one of the hill sides in the Valley of the Tombs. They pointed this out to successive travellers; and Belzoni happily looked into the matter. He found a tomb extending 320 feet into the hill; and how much more, there is no saying, as the earth had fallen, and barred further progress. Its depth is great, as it descends the whole way, sometimes by inclined planes, and sometimes by staircases.

The first thing we had to do was to plunge down a flight of ruined steps, to a perpendicular depth of 24 feet. This entrance was closed up by masonry when Belzoni was brought to the spot. This staircase

landed us in a passage where the walls were covered with inscriptions about Osirei; probably a copy of the eulogy and prayers read at his funeral; as such a record was often inscribed near the entrance of a tomb.—Next comes another staircase, on the walls of which are painted figures of genii which cannot be the Assessors, because they are not forty-two; but thirty-seven on the one wall, and thirty-nine on the other. They are very grotesque; and one longs to know what they mean. It is strange, and exceedingly agreeable, to feel that this longing has more hope in it as the centuries pass. It appeared, a while ago, to all eyes as it appears now to many, that Time buries the sources of our knowledge as he goes, choking them up with his inexhaustible sands, and making a dreary desert of the past. But what do we see next? Here comes Speculation, on her tentative march, her divining rod in hand, indicating to her follower, laborious Science, where and how to work; and lo! out oozes the stream again,—scanty and thick enough at first, but sure to run fuller and clearer every day. See how improved our prospects of Egyptian knowledge are since the days when our Cœur de Lion was besieging Acre! At that time, about 1190, the learned physician of Bagdad, Abdallatif, was lecturing at Cairo. In the excellent account of the Egypt of his day which he has left us, he says, speaking of the Pyramids and other monuments which were before his eyes, "these blocks are completely covered with writing in that ancient character, the import of which is wholly unknown at this day. I have not met with any person, in all Egypt, who could say that he knew, even by hearsay,

of any one who understood this character."—"Near these Pyramids, the remains of gigantic old edifices, and a great number of solidly constructed tombs are to be seen; and it is rare to meet with any portion of these ruins which is not covered with inscriptions in that ancient character which is wholly unknown at this day."* How delightful it must be to any Champollion, Rosellini, Wilkinson or Lepsius of our century to read this passage! And how encouraging it is to some of us who, by *their* labours, have looked with some degree of intelligence upon the monumental records of Egypt, to think that a future generation will probably see much more than we do;—perhaps understanding the genii, and the other mysteries of this tomb, nearly as well as if they had Pythagoras, or some more plain-spoken old priest, for a guide.

No part of the illustrations of this tomb is more mysterious than those of the second passage. Kneph, "the Spirit of the Supreme, which moves upon the face of the waters,"† has naturally a boat for one of his emblems: the serpent is another. Phthah, his colleague in the work of creation, is the patron of the occupant of this tomb; and their symbols abound. In this second passage we find the boats of Kneph: and a curious series of descending planes, each with a door upon it, which is supposed to figure the descent to Hades;—the Amenti, or western region of the dead. We meet the serpent here in the shape of the bier, which elsewhere is almost invariably lion-shaped. Here, the serpent has lion's paws, instead of human

* Relation de L'Egypte, par Abdallatif, Livre I., Ch. IV.

† Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, IV. 236.

feet, as usual. The "justifying" goddess stands at the lower end of the descent.

We next come to a small chamber which almost any one but Belzoni would have taken to be the extremity of the excavation. Its walls were all painted, and it had every appearance of completeness: and a deep pit in face of the entrance passage would have been concluded to be the place of burial. This pit, however, was a well: and it was dug there to draw off the waters which would otherwise injure, and which since have injured, the interior chambers. Belzoni filled up this pit; not knowing its purpose. He spied a hole in the wall, and, striking it, found it sounded hollow. He and his companions brought a palm trunk to bear on it, and battered it down; finding immediately that the best part of this wonderful tunnel was before them.

In the chamber to which the pit belongs, the King Osirei is seen making offerings to Osiris, and to some less conspicuous deities. It is in this chamber that an immeasurable serpent of considerable thickness, winds round the walls in a curious and rather elegant involution: and I think it is in the next that a serpent bier extends continuously round nearly half the walls, bearing a series of prostrate mummies. In another place, instead of mummies, the serpent supports human heads,—the headless bodies in some cases remaining near, and in other cases, being absent. The strangest use I saw made of the serpent in any old monument was here, where it was double-headed, and wore the crowns of the two Egypts,—Upper and Lower,—and had two pairs of human legs, walking opposite ways,—a dove being perched in the bend of its body. Some-

times the serpent is winged; and two, uniting their necks to support a disk, wonderfully resembled a caduceus.—In one instance, where an enormous serpent is carried by the gods, Champollion says it is the great Apophis, enemy of the sun, who is overcome and carried away captive: a suggestion which the Greeks were not slow to adopt. And it is impossible to look upon these representations of the serpent; of the tree of life, of which those who ate were made as gods; of the moving spirit of the Creator, and of the universally prevalent ideas of the original spread of water; the separation of the land from the water; the springing of vegetation, and the sudden appearance of animals on the new surface; and the separation of the upper air into regions of abode, without seeing whence was derived the first of the two accounts of the creation given in the Book of Genesis;*—that in which, not Jehovah, but the Elohim were engaged, who would be understood by the Egyptian instructors of Moses to be Kneph and Phthah;—the Presiding Spirit, and the Forming Intellect of the Supreme. The other, and very different, account† has little that is Egyptian in its character, and was probably not learned at Heliopolis or Thebes.

In the hall through the first chamber is the curious group of four kinds of people (four of each) which has excited so much speculation, but which Champollion believed that he understood plainly enough. Ra, the Sun, stands behind the sixteen figures, who are not captives, but dwellers under the sun,—inhabitants of the earth. The general legend declares them to be "the inhabitants of Egypt, and those of foreign

* Genesis, I.; II. 1, 2, 3. † Genesis, II. 4—25.

countries." Four are red, the Egyptian conventional complexion; and their special legend is "the race of men;" which savours of the conceit of primitive patriotism. The next four have primrose-coloured skins, and are called "Namou,"—("Asiatics.") The third set are altogether negro, in complexion and feature; and they are called "Nahasi,"—("Africans.") The fourth group are pale yellow again, and blue-eyed, and dressed in barbaric fashion, with feathers in their hair, but with long flowing robes. These are inscribed "Tamhou," which Champollion believed to designate a northern people, and probably Europeans.*—The rest of this hall is chiefly occupied by the reception of the departed king by the gods.

Next we come to an unfinished chamber, where the drawings are made for sculptures which have never been wrought. Here are the bold and free outlines which we cannot but admire now; outlines which were corrected where faulty by the master hand with its red chalk pencil, coming after the pupil with his black one. In one figure, the arm was made too long; and the rectification by the master,—the red outline over the black, stands as light, fresh, and no doubt effaceable, as in the hour when it was made,—before the Great Ramases was born, or in his childhood.

Then comes another staircase, and then more passages, with their ceremonial paintings: and at length, the great hall,—which yet is not the most interesting of these chambers of the grave. The most remarkable thing in it that meets the eye is the picture of the states through which the soul has to pass, after

* Lettres sur l'Egypte.

leaving the lower hemisphere, and entering upon the abodes of the sun. Of these abodes there are twelve, each shown by a door valve, disclosing a mummy, and guarded by a serpent.—Each serpent has a name;* and all have the legend "It dwells above this great door, and opens it to the god Sun."—One beautiful illustration is of the connexion of the deceased with time. The mummy stands with a chain round his neck, which is held by a procession of twenty-four figures, each with a star over its head. These are the Hours; and in another tomb I saw the same company, telling the season of the year by their appearance; those betokening the night being dark, and standing near together; those betokening the day being lighter, and further apart. If Champollion reads the legends of these spheres and spirits in the tombs aright, we have some light as to the expectations of these ancient worshippers. He translates thus, about the inhabitants of two series of abodes: "These hostile souls see not our god when he casts the rays from his disk: they no longer dwell in the terrestrial world; and they hear not the voice of the great god when he traverses their zones." "These have found grace in the eyes of the great god. They dwell in the abodes of glory; those in which the heavenly life is led. The bodies which they have abandoned will repose for ever in their tombs, while they will enjoy the presence of the Supreme God." †

In the side chambers are devices yet waiting for their interpretation:—flames, heads and headless bodies, men bound, or standing feet uppermost, or lying on their

* Champollion's Lettres sur l'Egypte. † Ibid.

backs,—or with their heads just leaving their shoulders; with the scarabæus in the boat, and other animal symbols which show that these are not, as some have hastily supposed, human sacrifices (which did not make a part of Egyptian worship,) but were probably a symbolical representation of the process of initiation into the priestly mysteries.

The sarcophagus chamber is wonderfully fine. After exploring it as well as we could with the lights we carried,—picking out the devices on the walls, but discerning nothing of the vaulted ceiling at the end where the sarcophagus stood, we enjoyed seeing the whole lighted up by a fire of straw. I never shall forget that gorgeous chamber in this palace of death. The rich colours on the wall, (especially the profusion of deep red,) were brought out by the flame; and the wonderful ceiling whose black vault was all starred with emblems, and peopled with lines of yellow figures,—countless, in two vast regiments,—this was like nothing earthly. And it *is* like nothing on the earth.—These starry emblems are what has been called the Zodiac. I should not have discovered or supposed them to bear that meaning: but Champollion, who knew more than anybody else about such things, offers his readings of old Egyptian almanacks—quoting the testimony of Diodorus about "the gilded circle of Osymandyas, which gave the hours of the rising of the constellations, with the influences of each." Champollion gives us some of these influences:—as, "Orion influences the left ear. 1st hour: Orion influences the left arm. 2nd hour: Sirius influences the heart," and so on.* Payne

* Lettres sur l'Egypte.

Knight says * that Astrology is not expressly mentioned among the pursuits of the ancient Egyptians; but that their creed certainly admitted the principle on which it is founded;—that is, necessity,—a derivation of all destinies from the original impulse given by an immutable Creator.

Beyond the sarcophagus chamber, the excavation still descends, by staircases and passages, till the mass of earth, fallen from above, bars further progress.

Such are the places where, as Isaiah says, "the Kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, each in his own house," (Is. XIV. 18) and such are the regions supposed by him to be moved at the approach of the tyrant, and to stir up their dead to meet him who has become as weak as they, and must now be brother of the worm, and be brought down to Hades, to the sides of the pit.—From Egypt, this method of burial spread far over the east; and the caverns of the hills contained the successive generations of many peoples, besides the Hebrews, who had, in their civilisation, followed the ideas and methods of Egypt. Happily for the human race, the ideas spread with the forms. After the example of Egypt, men preserved, amidst more or less corruption, the belief in One Supreme God; in a Divine Moral Government; in a future life and retribution; and in the greatest of all truths, that moral good is the highest good, and moral evil the deepest evil. From the lips of this thoughtful people it was that infant nations learned, through a long course of centuries, whatever they held that was most noble, concerning the origin and

* Payne Knight's "Inquiry into the Symbolical Language, &c."

tendencies of things, and what was most to be desired for the race of man at large, and the soul of every individual man. Many things remained to be learned; and many needed to be unlearned. We find much that was barbaric, coarse, ignorant, and untrue: but the wonder is at the amount of insight, achievement and truth. The ground gained by the human mind was never lost; for out of this Valley of the Nile issued Judaism: and out of Judaism issued, in due time, Christianity.

END OF VOL. I.

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BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

EASTERN LIFE,

PRESENT AND PAST.

BY

HARRIET MARTINEAU.

"Joyful to receive the impression thereof, as the eye joyeth to receive light; and not only delighted in beholding the variety of things, and vicissitude of times, but raised also to find out and discern the ordinances and decrees, which throughout all these changes are infallibly observed."—*Bacon. Advancement of Learning, I.*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CHAPTER XVI.

THEBES.—TOMBS.—MUMMIES.—MEDEENET HABOO.—DAYR EL BAHREE.—EL-KARNAC.

We passed the working hours of several days among the tombs; and my journal has copious accounts of them: but, remembering how much sooner one wearies of reading of such places than of seeing them, I will say little about them.

One of the most celebrated is the Harpers' Tomb, first mentioned by Bruce, and therefore often called by his name. This is the work of two of the Ramases: and a vast work it is,—extending 405 feet into the hill. The entrance passages have small chambers on either hand, whose walls present us with capital pictures of ancient Egyptian life. The kitchen comes first,—on the left hand side: and there the servants are kneading bread, and carrying to the oven cakes sprinkled with black seeds: and others are making broth, and pastry; and some are drawing off liquor with a syphon; and others slaughtering cattle, and preparing the joints for the cook. Some of the beef is to be boiled,—the joints being put into cauldrons over the fire: and an assistant is pounding something in a mortar; and there is a meat-safe, suspended from the ceiling.—The other chambers have boats, furniture, arms, gardens and a

fish-pond; fowls, fields and their produce; and so forth. The standards are striking. They bear the hawk, the fox, the ibis, &c. The blade part of the arms is painted blue, which seems to show that they were of steel.—The furniture is so elegant,—the couches, fauteuils, hangings, vases, baskets and lamps,—that it could hardly be surpassed in Greece or Rome at any time, or in Paris and London now. It is very strange to look upon these evidences of in-door luxury, and then to turn to the pictures of savage warfare on the propyla of the palaces. And yet, it is only what one knows to be happening even now, within the limits of Christendom. No luxury on earth can exceed that of many houses in New York: and at this moment, while some ladies are passing their days in the midst of it, their husbands are shooting down the Mexicans with a hatred as cordial as any Ramases ever felt for his southern or eastern foes. And if we ourselves have not outgrown warfare, (and it is too soon to declare that we have), we may present the same humiliating spectacle to the antiquarians of a future age. Our warfare will not be so savage as that of these old heathens; but it will be far more shameful, inasmuch as we call ourselves Christians.

Among the figures in this tomb are two harpers playing before the god Ao, or Hercules. They are clothed in white garments, striped with red: and their harps have each ten strings. Some preceding travellers have declared these harpers to be blind; but there is now too much defacement about the heads to permit this to be seen.

The most striking device I observed in this tomb

(unless indeed it be the piggish soul returning to earth in charge of the monkeys) was one which related to the death of the occupant of the tomb. The funereal boat is drawn by men who are at a loss about passing the bridge before them. The steep, angular bridge intercepts the rope; but the scarabæus stoops to help. By its hind legs it hangs to the heaven; while, with its foreclaws it pulls up the rope, allowing the hearse to pass. In this position the scarabæus signifies the resurrection.

Each of the small apartments having a closed pit, Sir G. Wilkinson supposes* that each was the burial-place of that officer of the royal household whose function is illustrated on the walls: — as the cook, the armour-bearer, the gardener, &c. This appears very probable.

In the tomb of the Pharaoh who reigned (it is thought) in right of his wife Taosiri, there is a vaulted chamber in which we could only grope till our dragoman lighted a fire of straw. Its blaze showed us a most striking device, representing the king in his former and present state of being. In the upper hemisphere is the sun, and a living man. Then there is the scarabæus, head downwards, representing, as before, the resurrection or immortality which connects the two lives of earth and heaven. Beneath is the moon, above the funereal altar, where Isis attends with her protecting wings, and mourners are ranged,—the whole group being inclosed by a half-circle of human-headed birds.

The tomb of Osirei II. is remarkable for being in great part unfinished, though begun with great care

* Modern Egypt and Thebes, II. 209.

and pains. This condition is at once a proof and a consequence of the shortness of his reign. This tomb is remarkably clear and bright-looking; but the figures become barer and barer as we proceed,—one sort of lines of illustration after another failing, till we come to blank walls. The sarcophagus chamber is quite rough and rude: but the sculptured figure of the king on the lid of the sarcophagus is fine,—being in relief to the height of nine inches.

The priests took care to preserve their grandeur and rank after death. Their tombs are found where the rock is of the most compact quality, fit to bear extensive excavations, while inferior people must find a place where there is more danger of the soil crumbling. We went as far as heat and bats would let us in a priestly tomb which occupies an acre and a quarter of the heart of the rock. The great man who occupied it left other tokens of his wealth; but none could be more striking than this. There is an extraordinary array of niches, pillars and pits: but the covering of almost the whole of the walls with small hieroglyphic writing is the crowning wonder. Will no one go and read this great volume of Egyptian ecclesiastical history?

The tomb of the Pharaoh who pursued the Hebrews to the Red Sea is extremely interesting. There are five lines of tribute-bearers,—black, red, light red, and yellow,—showing how extensive was his dominion. The people of "Pount" bring ivory, apes, leopards, and other tropical wealth. The next bring valuables of an ornamental kind which they declare to be "chosen offerings of the chiefs of the gentiles of Kufa."* Next

* Wilkinson's Modern Egypt and Thebes, II. 235.

come Ethiopians, "gentiles of the south," with African gifts of beasts, skins and gold. Then come the whites, —red-haired,—dressed in white garments with a blue border,—arms covered (Sir G. Wilkinson saw gloves, but I did not,) and bringing, among other offerings, a bear. These must be northern people, surely;—and at the time of the Exodus! Their wives follow with the other women who are collected in the rear; and they are dressed in long gowns which have three flounces. If our upholsterers might study in these tombs, so, it appears, might our dress-makers.

This is the tomb which exhibits to us the Egyptian trades, which it is so interesting to understand. When one looks at the brick-making, one thinks of the Hebrews who were just effecting their escape from that employment. I will abstain from details which may be found fully given elsewhere, mentioning only, as curious, the bellows, the inlaying or joining of wood of different colours with glue, the stone-cutting; and, above all, the carving of the Sphinx, and of two colossal statues, which some suppose to be the Vocal Statue, and the Karnac Colossus. The men are at work on stages, chipping away at the mighty monster, the Sphinx, which here looks as calm and cheerful as afterwards in its own person, among the sands. Such of these tombs as are simple tunnels are airy and lofty. The roof of this one rises towards the inner end,—no one knows why; for the effect is not good in any way. In the sporting tomb we see how the Egyptians excelled in the painting of animals. The animation of action here, and generally where brutes are presented, shows that the stiffness and monotony of their human images were from choice, and

not from incapacity for other methods. The animation of their warrior figures indeed shows the same thing.

We visited, of course, the tombs of the Queens, and explored two, as far as decay and the blackening of the walls would permit. The dominions of these ancient ladies were indicated by masses of red and and yellow rock, with large black birds perched upon them. The complexions are somewhat strange and perplexing. The yellow prevails, it being the sign of feminine subjects; but we find pink and blue faces also. The blue is probably appropriated, as elsewhere, to individuals of the priestly caste. Emblematical animals abound here, and a row of apes, not bareheaded, was so astonishingly like a set of Christian judges as to send us into a fit of most profane laughter. These Queenly tombs are in a desolate mountain hollow, with rock towering overhead:—a fit place for hiding away the pomps and vanities of the world.

We much enjoyed exploring two recently opened tombs;—one discovered about five years ago; the other only a few months before; and by Lepsius. Of the first of these we thought highly,—not only from the good execution of the animals, and the fine effect of a phalanx of men, but because the faces of homage and supplication were admirably given. The colours were very gay, where not spoiled by smoke. The gayest of all was the tomb opened by Lepsius. No picture in this year's exhibition could be brighter. And the stucco was smooth, and the outlines clear as on the day when it was closed. The figures were all women, I believe, in flowing garments of white striped with red. As for the finish of the painting, I observed an ibis which,

while duly spirited as a whole, had every feather separately painted, in light grey outlines upon dark grey ground. This was more like a daguerreotype picture than any other work of art I ever saw.

After visiting so many repositories of the dead where every resource had been used to make them secure, and ample and sumptuous, it was strange to pass by spots where the common people of those old days were laid away. It was a doctrine of this ancient nation that all Egyptians were noble: and they applied this so far as to consider every one who was virtuous enough entitled to cross the dark water, and to be laid in the sacred soil of the death region;—just as we declare that all men are equal in the presence of God,—that he has no respect of persons, and that in his field, the rich and poor lie down together. But as, with us, the rites of a pauper funeral differ from those of a princely one; as in the United States, the dark-skinned children of God are laid apart from the whites, so here, in this metropolis of heathendom, did human weakness come in to mock the profession which human reason had made. Not far from the royal valley of death are pits,—hardly to be called catacombs, where undistinguished mummies were laid. One day, our attendants, always on the watch for treasure of one sort or another, saw something which induced them to poke and dig; and next ensued the extraordinary sight of disinterring mummies. These bodies had probably been searched before, for valuables; but they had been buried away with some care, and probably for a long time; for it was no easy matter to disengage them from the soil. We partly unrolled two: and even ventured upon removing the bituminous mask

which covered the face, which came away, bearing the impression of not uncomely features.

While we were fingering the curly brown hair of one of these mummies, our dragoman coolly wrenched off the head, the throat giving way like a fold of rotten leather. I never remember so strange a sensation as in seeing this: but the thing was done before we could stop it.—People on the spot have no notion of reverence for these remains. Travellers who were at Thebes in 1827 tell us how all the fires wanted by themselves and their attendants were made of the sycamore wood of the mummy-cases. Abdallatif* tells us how, in his time (the 12th century) the country people stripped the mummies of whatever was of substance sufficient to make garments; and sold the rags of the mummy cloth to the paper-makers, to make paper for the use of the grocers. He speaks of some of the sycamore wood being then rotten; but some sound, and fit for use.—One extraordinary variety of burial he tells us of, on the word of one on whom he could rely. This friend of his was once searching for treasure with some companions, in the tombs at Geezeh, when they came upon a jar, carefully sealed. They opened it, found it contained honey, and began to eat. Presently, one of the party perceived a hair sticking to his finger. Drawing it out, he found it belonged to the body of an infant which was preserved in the honey. The body was in good condition, and adorned with jewels and rich ornaments.

What care to preserve the earthy frame! and with

* Abdallatif. Relation de l' Egypte, Livre I. Ch. IV.

what a result! The three thousand years of purgatory of many of these Theban sleepers is now about expiring. If their faith was a true one, and they are now returning to resume their bodies, and begin a new cycle, in what a state will they find their sumptuous death-chambers, and their hundred-gated metropolis! Their skulls, stained with bitumen, and indented with the creases of the bandages, are carried away;—one to Russia, another to America;—one is in a royal palace —another in a Mechanics' Museum:—their coffins are burnt to make an English lady's tea; their cere-cloths are made into paper to wrap up an Arab's tobacco. The spices and unguents were taken from their brains and chests hundreds of years ago, to be melted down, and serve for some other perfuming and embalming.— These things may appear less grave and pathetic at home than on the spot: for mummies are little more respected in Europe than by the ignorant Arabs who pull them up and to pieces, for sale and use. Something is perhaps owing to the name; and something to the dollish oddity of their appearance: but, in its proper place, there is great dignity about a mummy. Reposing in its recess or painted chamber, and bearing the marks of allegiance to Osiris, and of acceptance by him, there is something as solemn in its aspect as in that of any coffin in an English vault: and this solemnity is not lessened by the thought that in that still breast and sleeping head beat the heart, and wrought the ideas of three thousand years ago. This black pall of oblivion hanging over all gives one, though a mere stranger, something of the mourner feeling which is one of the privileges of the speculative, when bringing

speculation to bear on the obliterated past, instead of the unrevealed future.

We had an opportunity of seeing how different is the interment of the present inhabitants of the country from that of the old. Of old, seventy-two days intervened between the death and the burial. Here it was hardly more minutes. A woman in the village near our boat died at one o'clock; and before five, we met the funeral procession. The howl here answers perhaps to the throwing dust on the head, that we see in the sculptures. Both appear painfully barbarous, as all strong outward expressions of grief must ever be.—We learned that, wood being scarce, there was no coffin; but that the woman was buried in new clothes; and that stones would be laid over the grave, so as to secure it perfectly.

On the 23rd, we went to Medeenet Haboo, including the great palace temple of Ramases III., and some older buildings, which I will deny myself the pleasure of dwelling on. I must speak presently of Karnac, which is still grander; and I cannot hope that my readers can enter much into the feelings with which Egyptian travellers regard these vast monuments. I find in my journal this remark which here occurs:—"it is difficult to assign the grounds of the knowledge one gains in these places of the people who lived in them: but it really amounts to much." I must remember that it is difficult to assign the grounds of knowledge, and to convey the impressions received of the living and moving existence of these people, and not carry my readers through too many of those scenes which can be vivified only by the inhabiting spirit of

the spot. I will mention only two or three peculiarities of this pile of edifices.

On the wall of the Pavilion of Ramases, we see him among his attendant ladies. He is seated; they are standing. Some are offering flowers; others waving fans; and one is his partner at that game resembling draughts which is painted on older walls than these;—in the caves at Benee Hasan. There is a board with pieces resembling pins or pegs; and the lady's hand is on one which she is about to move.

In another place, we have the coronation; a very grand affair. The king is on his canopied throne or shrine, which is borne by twelve princes, his sons. A great procession follows, of princes, priests, soldiers, and various official personages. A scribe is reading from a scroll; the High-priest burns incense; and the band makes music.—Further on, the king presents offerings to his god; and the queen looks on from one side. Some of the priestly order bear the statues of the king's ancestors, and a crowd of standards. The hieroglyphic legends tell us that the king has put on the crown of the Upper and Lower countries: and birds are set free,—carrier-pigeons,—to convey the news to the gods of the north, south, east and west. This last was a pretty discovery of Champollion's. Then comes a long invocation, which is written on the wall, above the figure of the reading priest. The king has cut six ears of corn with a sickle; and these are offered to the god by a priest.—They had grand coronations in those days, it is clear.

The war-pictures are very spirited; and, in some respects, very barbarous. There are heaps of severed

hands, which the scribes are numbering and noting; each heap being marked 3000. On the outer walls are heaps of tongues, also numbered. We are told that the rows of captives contain one thousand in each line.—We have, on the outer walls, a naval conflict, for the first time,—supposed to have taken place on some Asiatic inland sea, as the enemy appear to be of Asiatic race. The Egyptian gallies are distinguished from those of the foe by a lion's head at the prow. One pretty scene in this foreign country is where the king is attacked by lions, which he kills and puts to flight,—in a marsh.—We have also besieged towns, where the children are lifted in over the ramparts, for safety, and the besiegers fell trees in the neighbouring woods. Then we have triumphs, captives, approving gods, &c., as in other places, but with much grandeur.—The predominant impression on one's mind here, as in so many other monumental areas in Egypt, is of the interest to us now of that early stage of the human mind which united with its barbaric aims and pursuits such serene and abstract conceptions of deity, and such a subordination of the present life to the future. Here we have the king and all human beings in intense action, in the Physical Force stage of civilisation, while the gods remain the same imperturbable abstractions that we ever find them; and the preparation of the tombs is an object of even more interest to men than the prosecution of their wars. It is curious, and very instructive to see how an age appropriated to the supremacy of Force was no less distinguished by Faith in abstractions.

When Thebes had so far declined as to become a

mere collection of villages in the plain, the Christians took possession of Medeenet Haboo, plastering over the sculptures with mud, putting up an altar at the east end of the temple, introducing their little red columns and low roofs among the massy and gorgeous pillars of the heathen courts; and even defacing the architraves to admit their rafters. Their priests took possession of the small apartments of the temple; and their people built mud houses within the precincts. On the approach of the Arabs, the Christians fled to Isna; and here lie their remains, scattered among the outstanding glories of an older time.—I have said how the Christian erections and paintings appeared to us. It may be interesting to know how they appeared to our predecessor in this journey,—the Bagdad physician who saw these places when the crusaders were warring with his faith in Syria. If we remember that he speaks of the Coptic Christians of between six and seven centuries ago, we shall not be apt to take offence, as at an attack on the Christianity of our country and our time. We do not pique ourselves on a fellowship with the Coptic Christians of the 12th century in their country settlements.

Abdallatif says, after extolling the grandeur and beauty of the Egyptian sculptures, "The children of Israel, having been witness of the homage which the Egyptians rendered to these idols, of the profound veneration which they entertained for them, and of the zeal with which they worshipped them, became accustomed, during their long abode among this nation, to see these superstitious ceremonies; and having found in Syria also people delivered over in

the same manner to the worship of idols, required of Moses that he should give them such gods as these people had: which drew forth from Moses this reproach, *You are a foolish nation.* The greater number of Christians, being either Egyptians or Sabeans, have retained the propensities belonging to their origin, and have suffered themselves to slide easily into the ancient habits of their forefathers:— in consequence, they have admitted images into their churches, and into the temples appropriated to the exercise of their worship. They have even pushed matters to an extreme: they have in many ways improved upon the existing abuses of this custom, and have carried their folly so far as to pretend to represent the god whom they adore surrounded by angels. All this was merely a remnant of the customs of their ancestors which had been preserved among them; with this difference, however: that their ancestors, far from representing the deity under any form, had too exalted an idea of him to imagine that He could be apprehended by the sense, or comprehended by the understanding. That which has drawn the Christians into these excesses, and which has emboldened them to adopt such a custom, is the dogma which they profess of the divinity of a creature. —All this," the sober Mohammedan goes on to say, "we have discussed with care in the treatise which we have composed against the Christians." * — No enlightened person, of any faith, could help sympathising with Abdallatif while in sight of the profane daubs which the Christians have left among the

* Abdallatif. Relation de l' Egypte, Livre I. Ch. IV.

sculptures, and which seem put there to give every advantage to the old heathens. They have something of the effect of the ritual of the Greek church, which makes our most religious countrymen feel, in Asia Minor, that they had rather, in case of need, turn Mohammedan than enter it.

Near Medeenet Haboo is an expanse of sunk soil, with alluvial deposits round its edges, which Sir G. Wilkinson believes to have contained the Lake of the Dead, over which the body must be ferried to its tomb.*

Passing over the other edifices on the western bank, I will mention only that on the last day of our abode on this side, we visited the very old temple called Dayr el Bahree, or "the Northern Convent;" so called from its having been appropriated by the Christians for a church and monastery. It is gloriously situated; in the great central perpendicular rock;—excavated in the mountain itself; and once approached by an ascending dromos of great length, and between rows of sphinxes, with pylons and obelisks at intervals, and a succession of terraces at last. This temple is quite unlike any other; and few are more impressive. The crude brick arches of ancient date which are found in many places prove that the Egyptians were acquainted with the principle of the arch: yet here the vaulted chambers showed roofs composed of courses of stone, laid on flat, and hollowed into an arch afterwards. Some bits of walls and curious corners had been recently laid open to view,—their paintings as vivid as ever. On one wall,

* Wilkinson's Modern Egypt and Thebes, II. 137.

from which the sand had been shovelled away, we found a splendid lotus plant, on which was a nest of water birds, bending the budded stem which supported it. A rabbit had attacked the young birds: a dog was attacking the rabbit, and an ibis the dog. On another part of the plant were a lizard and two yellow butterflies: and two human hands were plucking blossoms.

This was, as I said, our last day on the western shore. Our guides knew this; and I fancied that my open-faced and obliging donkey-boy felt sorry to part; as I truly did. There could be no exchange of sentiment, however; for the only language we had in common consisted of two words, which we found enough to signify our pleasure by, and that was all. "Bono" and "non bono" was our whole discourse. But my guide's face and close service on this last day seemed to say more. He understood my wish to go once more to the Ramaséum, and look about me when there;—to go once more to the Colossi, and ride round them once and again. He put my donkey to its best canter, that I might accomplish all this. I turned a grateful face upon him, and said "Bono:" and his answer was, with a wise nod, and holding out his hand, "La, la,—bono baksheesh!" He little knew how he had spoiled every thing by that one word,—what I might have given him, in cash and character, but for that act of begging at such a moment.

We crossed to the El-Uksur side in the dusk of the evening, and looked forward to spending the next two days in the most magnificent spot in Egypt,—among the ruins of El-Karnac.

The 25th was cloudy;—our first cloudy day in Africa. I was surprised to see how the whole landscape, and especially the ruins, suffered by the absence of light, shadow and vivid tint. It was very well to become aware of this; but one would rather it had happened elsewhere. We had planned to ride over in the evening, to see El-Karnac by moonlight; but in the evening, the whole sky was grey. We had not, all this day, one single gleam from sun or moon. We had made such a survey of the ruins, however, as prepared us for a thorough exploring the next day.

On the 26th, the sky was still dull when I looked out: but as I was taking my early walk on the shore, some lustrous gleams touched upon the points of the western mountains, and at length illumined the whole shore, and stole over the river towards us. Before breakfast, we visited first a stuffed crocodile which was offered for sale. It was a hideous creature; but I was glad to have an opportunity for a safe study of it. Then we went down to our old kandjia of the cataracts, which had just arrived with a cargo of slaves for Ibraheem Pasha's hareem. The girls looked as earnest and content as they always do while making cakes, Nubian fashion: but the officer who had charge of them and the boys carried a little whip.

After breakfast, we rode away to El-Karnac, the sun coming out, but the wind rising so as to cover us with dust, and render the examination of the external sculptures less easy than we could have wished.

The road from El-Uksur to El-Karnac once lay, as every body knows, between sphinxes, standing six feet apart, for a mile and a half. Those which remain,

headless, encumbered, and extending only a quarter of a mile, are still very imposing. Then come pylons, propyla, halls, obelisks, temples, groves of columns, and masses of ruins, oppressive to see, and much more to remember. I think I must say nothing about them. They must be sacred to the eyes that see them; I mean, incapable of communication to any others. Those that have not seen El-Karnac know nearly as much as can be told when they remember that here are the largest buildings, and the most extensive ruins in the known world: and that the great hall is 329 feet by 170, and 85 feet high, containing 134 columns, the 12 central ones of which are 12 feet in diameter, and the others not much smaller; the whole of this forest of columns being gay with colours, and studded with sculptures.—Of this hall the central roof is gone, and part of the lateral covering. The columns are falling, and at an accelerated rate. There is saltpetre in the stone; and the occasional damps from the ground cause the corrosion of these mighty masses near the bases. They fall, one by one; and these leaning wrecks, propped up by some accident which must give way, have a very mournful aspect. We cannot but look forward to the successive fall of these incomparable pillars, as to that of the trees of a forest undermined by springs. These will sink under a waste of sand, as those into the swamp, to be perhaps found again after thousands of years, and traced out curiously,—a fossil forest of the mind.

Nothing was more striking to us than the evidences of the earthquake, to which, and not only to Cambyses and Ptolemy Lathyrus, we attribute the overthrow of gigantic columns in the area, colossal statues, and

mountainous masses of the propyla. If, perplexed by the magnitude of Egyptian achievement altogether, we give up the point whether means existed for the overthrow of such masses, there still remains the question how huge columns could fall straight, so as to be shattered in regular order, by any means but such a shaking of the earth as art cannot be conceived to produce.

One curious incident I must mention. A stone has fallen out, in more than one place, from the wall of the old Pharaonic propyla; and looking in at the holes, I saw sculptured and painted blocks, built into the interior;—remnants of a still earlier time, used as material. These propyla were standing before Moses was born. The great hall was built by Osirei, the occupant of the magnificent tomb I have described. But the original buildings of El-Karnac are of a date beyond our ken. The earliest portions now remaining are a hundred years older than any other edifices in Thebes.—I have before mentioned that the only known allusion to the Jews in the monuments of Egypt is on the walls of El-Karnac. The conqueror Sheshonk (Shishak) holds by the hair a group of captives, whose race is determined, not only by the face, but by the cities of Judah being named among the array of tributaries.

The finest view I obtained of the El-Karnac ruins was from a mound just above the lake. To the left lay the blue lake,—a sheet of still water, fed by the Nile through the soil, but too salt now for use. Remains of quays and baths made this look as ancient and forlorn as any other part. To the right lay the somewhat dreary plain which extends between the ruins and the

river. Before me, filling a circuit of a mile and a half, lay the ruins; obelisks peeping over roofless temples; statues seen through rows of columns; pylons standing firm, like outposts, while within there is now nothing but wreck to guard: and all around, wherever we could look or set foot, were mute mourners over the desolations of time,—shattered inscriptions, defaced pictures, useless blocks, and unintelligible fragments.

The finest view I obtained from the ruins was from the top of the mound heaped up against the face of the propyla which front the river. Here I could command the plain of tufty coarse grass, strewn with stone, and varied with palm-clumps: and the remains of the avenue of smaller sphinxes, which used to extend to the landing-place on this side; then the platform above the quay: then the river; and beyond it the western plain, with its precipitous mountain boundary, now drest in rainbow hues. The temple at El-Kurneh was hidden by a palm-clump: but the Ramaséum, with its wrecked propyla, stood out distinct: and the recess of the Dayr el Bahree was traceable; and the group at Medeenet Haboo: and, best of all, the Pair were sitting in the bright sunlight, above, because far beyond, the dark screen of palm groves which hid the modern village. This was my last view of them; and in my parting yearning, I thought it the best. How inexplicable is the distinctness with which some images impress themselves upon the memorial faculty! I did not see them more distinctly in that African sunshine than I see them now.

The finest impression, or the most memorable, which we obtained of El-Karnac was derived from our moon-

light visit, that last evening. There is no questioning of any style of art, if only massive, when its results are seen by moonlight. Then, spaces and distances become what the mind desiderates; and drawbacks are lost in shade. Here, the mournful piles of fragments were turned into masses of shade; and the barbaric colouring disappeared. Some capricious, but exquisite lights were let in through crevices in the roof and walls of the side chambers. Then, there were the falling columns and their shadows in the great hall, and the long vistas ending in ruins; and the profound silence in this shadowy place, striking upon the heart. In the depth of this stillness, when no one moved or spoke, the shadow of an eagle on the wing above fell upon the moonlit aisle, and skimmed its whole length.

It was with heavy hearts, and little inclination to speak that we turned, on our way home, to take a last view of the pylons of Karnac. The moonlit plain lay, with the river in its midst, within the girdle of mountains. Here was enthroned the human intellect when humanity was elsewhere scarcely emerging from chaos. And how was it now? That morning, I had seen the Governor of Thebes, crouching on his haunches on the filthy shore among the dung heaps, feeding himself with his fingers, among a circle of apish creatures like himself.

The next morning, I was glad we were off. I had had as much as, without more knowledge, I could well bear: and it was a delightful holiday to be sitting on deck, reading, and looking at shadoofs and mountains, and wheat and lupins, as we did a month ago.

CHAPTER XVII.

MANUFACTURES AT KENNEH.—MANNERS OF THE CREW.—EXCURSION TO ABYDUS.

We escaped the dreaded dining with the old consul at Kenneh. He invited us, when the gentlemen called for their letters; but they pleaded business. The old gentleman then begged our empty bottles of our dragoman, and was made quite happy by them. The cotton manufactory at Kenneh appeared to the gentlemen better than that at Isna, which certainly struck me as the poorest attempt at a manufacture I had ever seen. The machinery there was English, but kept in bad order. It was worked by horse power; and the horses were in poor plight. The thread produced was uneven, and the woven fabric therefore of indifferent quality, from so much of the machinery being worked by hand. One might say that this was as much as could be expected from a factory on the other side of Thebes: but then, what beautiful fabrics the old Thebans wore! and of their own manufacture. And what luxuries they brought into their homes, by exporting their woollen and cotton goods!—At this Kenneh factory, five hundred people were employed, at wages varying, according to their qualifications, from 100 piastres (1*l.*) per month, with food, to 50 and 30 piastres. The

machinery here was superior to that at Isna; the thread more even; and the woven fabric therefore better.

I have before mentioned the Kenneh pottery, and the wide demand for it. As much as possible is still done by hand. There is no mould for the inside. The jar is formed on the ancient potter's wheel; and a piece of copper is used to give the external form, and to mark the outside with the curious scratches which adorn the Kenneh jars. Of course, it is a rare thing to see a jar which stands quite straight, or is not out of shape, one way or another. A man can make one hundred per day of the porous water bottles in common use.

There is a question among students of Egyptian history about some military passes; and a consequent desire to know from those who have been up the Nile where the mountains approach the river so closely as to make it difficult for armies to pass. Of course, every thing must depend upon the season. But, at the season of our voyage, I should say there was no part of the shore where an army could not pass on the one side of the river or the other: and it cannot be conceived that any army, native or invading, could be in the valley without means of crossing the river, which with the inhabitants has always been such a matter of course as it is not seen to be anywhere else. At the high rock of Chenoboscion, and for some way on each side of it, there is only room for a narrow belt of tilled land, at low Nile; but on the opposite shore is a plain of considerable width. Generally speaking, (I might say universally) when the hills approach on one [illegible] the other; and it is obvious that

this must have been the case through all the changes the Nile has certainly made in its course.

We were now about to bid farewell to the doum palm,—a tree which I liked in its place,—its stiffness and angularity rendering it curiously appropriate to the scenery in which it is found. A grove of it between us and the Dendara temple this day looked as well as any tall elms about a cathedral.

The crocodiles abounded now when we were soon to see no more. Some remained asleep on the banks even after the sun had gone down. Near Hou, Mr. E. saw nineteen at one time on the mud banks.

We witnessed more of the doings of the crew now that we were not absent on our temple-haunting all day long. The Buck did not improve in sobriety as time went on; and one morning about this date, he was insufferably noisy, in his elation at being dressed in a grand suit of new clothes;—brown burnoose, yellow slippers and a vast turban, white as muslin can be. On Mrs. Y. complaining of the noise, after the Rais and dragoman had used every kind of remonstrance, Alee quietly went up to him, as he stood in his grandeur by the gunwale, lifted him by the waist, and popped him overboard. We really feared that the weight of his clothes would have sunk him; but Alee knew better. In two minutes I saw him standing by the gunwale again, high and dry, but in his ordinary blue shirt and white skullcap.—One of our quiet Nubians, twenty-five years of age, had already two wives; and by what we heard of his life at home, he might well be content on board the boat. As A[illegible] a rich man may put his wives into [illegible]

but the poor man cannot: and the women quarrel fiercely and incessantly. This Nubian had to carry presents for his two wives after every voyage; and if they were not precisely alike, there was no end to the wrangling.—Alee called this permission to have more than one wife a very bad part of his religion. He was not yet married at all; and he did not intend to marry till he should have obtained money enough by his present employment to enable him to settle down in a home of his own. One of my friends one day expressed a hope that he would be careful in the choice of a wife; —so careful in assuring himself of her temper and goodness as not to be tempted to put her away, as husbands in Egypt do so lightly and cruelly. Alee did not quite promise this; but gave an account of what plan he should pursue, which shows how these matters are regarded by sensible young men in Egypt. He said he should buy a white wife, when he wanted to settle. He should tell her what he expected of her;—viz., to be good-tempered; to make him comfortable; and to take care of his "boys." If she failed, he should, the first time, tell her his mind "very strongly." And then, if she got out of temper, or was negligent a second time, he should "just put her away." This was said with the gesture of Othello at the words "whistle her down the wind."

The wag Ibraheem was seen to be very sulky to-day, after having passionately thrown some bread overboard, and spat out after it what was in his mouth. This was because the Rais rebuked him for his shabbiness in [redacted] poor Nubians (the Cairenes having all while laying by his own money

for his wife,—he having neither parents nor children to maintain. The way in which this was told to us showed that the maintaining of parents was regarded quite as a matter of course. It is to be feared that the parents' need of it is too much a matter of course, in the present state of that order of society in Egypt.

Of the temple of Dendara I will say nothing. The oldest names it bears are those of Cleopatra and her son Cæsarion; and it has not therefore the interest of antiquity; while its beauty is of the same kind as that of the Isna temple. At Dendara, as at Isna, the Pasha has caused the building to be cleared out; for which the world is obliged to him: and it would have been more so, if he had not run a mud-brick wall directly up against the middle of the front; so that no complete view of the portico can be had from any point. However, we must thankfully accept any conservative aid we can obtain, and hope to remove, in course of time, any blemishes as manageable as mud-brick walls.

On Saturday, January 23rd, we made an excursion of some importance:—to Abydus, which stood near, if not, as some scholars think, on the spot where This was built;—This, the old capital of Upper Egypt, where sixteen kings reigned before Thebes was heard of. It will be observed that as we are coming down the river, we are ascending the stream of Time. Thebes, built chiefly by Monarchs of the Third Period, appeared very ancient when we were there. We are now (supposing Abydus to be the site of This) carried back to the First Period.—The only other ancient monuments now remaining for us to see were the Caves at [redacted] whose dates are of the latter part

and the Pyramids, and the cluster of remains about them; which are the very oldest of all, bearing date from the early part of the First Period. If we this day stood on the site of This, we were standing on the buried metropolis of powerful monarchs, who flourished here within a few centuries of the building of the Pyramids;—somewhere between four and five thousand years ago.

We left our boat at Beliane, and were to rejoin it in the evening at Girgeh, a few miles down the river. We rode for above two hours through a rich plain which bore crops of wheat, barley, lupins, vetches, lentils, a little flax, beans and sugar-cane. The barley was turning, in some places; and the beans were in blossom; and some beginning to pod. They grow tall, but are less strong in the stalk than with us. I had a good opportunity to-day of observing the supplies of water in the interior of the country. More than one curious point depends on whether the whole supply of water is derived from the river, or whether there are any springs whatever near the mountains. I should not have doubted the supply being wholly derived from the river, but from the decided declaration of one resident who certainly ought, from his function, to understand the matter. But his declaration that the interior of the country is watered partly by springs was contradicted by so many,—one of these being Linant Bey—as to convince me that it was mistaken. The ponds I saw,—this day in considerable number, seven miles from the river—are filled by filtration from the Nile. Linant Bey says that the water of the Nile filters through to any distance where water is found in

the valley. From another authority I learned that it penetrates to the Oasis. The ponds I saw to-day were of various depths, shapes and sizes. Some few had clear water in them; the shallower had a mere daub of mud at the bottom, while the sides were green with young wheat: and the deepest were half filled with a green puddle. A large number of men were employed in cleaning out the canal; and some of our party saw others employed upon a new one. The first thought of many, in reading about this filtration of Nile water, will be of the passage in Herodotus about the actual burial place of the king in the Great Pyramid. Speaking of the Second Pyramid, Herodotus says,* "It does not approach the magnitude of that of Cheops (I have measured them both); it has neither subterranean structures, nor canal to convey the waters of the Nile; whereas the other, where it is said the tomb of Cheops is placed, is in an island, and is surrounded by the waters of the Nile, which are conducted there by a canal constructed for the purpose." This version, which I translate from Larcher, intimates that the Pyramid itself stood in an island, and was surrounded by a canal. But another version of the passage gives a different impression. Sir G. Wilkinson offers the passage thus:—"It has neither underground chambers, nor any canal flowing into it from the Nile, like the other; where the tomb of its founder is placed in an island, surrounded by water."—In another passage, Herodotus tells us (II. 124) that Cheops made "the subterranean structures to serve him for a tomb, in an island formed by the waters of the Nile, which he introduced into it by a canal." There are some

* Herod. II. 127.

who, finding more and more "subterranean structures" the lower they go in the Great Pyramid, and of a very different kind of building from mere foundation,—that is, passages leading down and down again, so as to indicate some object lying deeper still, cannot but wonder whether there may not be a royal tomb at the bottom, with a moat of Nile water around it. What a discovery it would be! It must be observed, however, as Larcher points out, that Herodotus does not declare the king to be actually in the Pyramid, but only his destined tomb; while Diodorus relates that the kings who built these Pyramids were so odious to their subjects that neither of them was actually buried there. The people threatened to snatch the corpses from their graves, and tear them to pieces; so that the monarchs desired their families to inter them secretly in some unknown place.* We should like to know, some day, whether the penetrating Nile has been searching out, for all these thousands of years, the secrets of that great prison-house which has permitted access to no other visitor.

One of the most curious sights occurring in the course of an Egyptian country ride, like this of ours to-day, is of the little victories of the Nile over the Desert, in the outskirts of their battle-field. It is worth riding ten miles inland, if it were for nothing else, to see what the soil is where the fertile and barren tracts meet. In the cucumber and melon patches, I saw holes dug which showed a layer of from two to five inches of rich black soil deposited upon the most hopeless yellow sand. We all know that it is so. We all know how the Nile deposits its mud: but it is best

* Larcher's note to Herodotus, II. 127.

witnessed by seeing the crust thus sharply cut through, and perceiving how it lies unmixed upon the sand.

We passed villages, farms, and single dwellings to-day, with their dogs, geese, cattle and children. The camels removed it further from likeness to country scenes elsewhere than any other feature. We passed the village of Arábat el Matfoon (which means "the buried") and came out upon the site and ruins of Abydus,—a mighty place on its own account, whether it succeeded This or not.—The position, for a capital city, is very fine. I doubt whether the situation of Thebes itself is finer, except that there the Nile is nearer, and in full view; whereas here it is merely traced by its evidences, unless the canals are full.—From the south-east to the north-west is an amphitheatre of rocks, guarding the plain from the sands of the Lybian Desert. In the middle of this barrier, due west from the temples, is an opening of great interest. It is the road to the Great Oasis. How many caravans and military processions have moved and glittered along that road from the city, disappearing in that defile of the hills! From those precipitous rocks now descend sandy slopes, as far as the mounds which lie between the hills and the fertile plain. The temple and palace,—now the only coherent remains, are so far elevated as to afford a noble view of the wide area which they ruled. They rose above the city which now no doubt lies buried under these hillocky sands. A very distant range of heights, faint and soft in colour, incloses the rest of the landscape; and from them to the temples spreads the rich plain, all variegated with groves and belts of palm and acacia, among which the villages are hid. The airy space and

brightness of this scene are not to be conveyed by description.

The remaining temple and palace are mainly the work of Ramases the Great and his father Osirei. The temple is dedicated to Osiris, to whom indeed the whole area is sacred; for this is one of the places where he was believed to have been buried; and where the opulent families of the region all therefore desire to be buried too. This peculiarity, and that of the road to the Great Oasis beginning here, sufficiently account for the grandeur of Abydus, after it had parted with its primitive distinction of being, as This, the capital of Upper Egypt.—Meeting Ramases and his father here, we think differently of them from what we do at Thebes. Here, they are comparatively moderns, though living while the Hebrews were driving out the inhabitants of the Holy Land. Ramases and his father were as much younger than the monarchs on whose foundations they built as we are younger than Josephus and the conquering Titus who laid low the temple of Solomon. This temple contained the celebrated tablet,—the tablet of Abydus—on which was cut, by order of Ramases the Great, a list of names of the kings his predecessors. This tablet is now in the British Museum. As far as it goes, it most satisfactorily accords with the memorials on the temples and palaces, and with the names given on the walls of the Ramaséum at Thebes. But the beginning of the list is unhappily broken away; and we thus lose the light we most wanted for the illustration of the earlier periods of Egyptian history.

Ramases lined one chamber of this temple throughout with alabaster.—The only part of this building which could be entered when we were there was the hall;

and even there we could only creep about among the capitals of the pillars. We could not even count them. I made out that there were two in the width; but I could not penetrate further than the seventh in length; which made fourteen. An Arab, whom we sent in to count the rest, said there were twenty-six in all. If Ramases could have looked forward to the time when his temple would be explored in this way, how he would have mourned for his religion and for mankind! The capitals of these pillars are so large, and the architraves so deep, that the hall, if cleared out, must be very lofty. I saw the cornices of two portals; but there is no saying what lies behind them. Air and light are let in by holes in the roof.

The palace at hand is remarkable for its roof, which is of sandstone, while the walls are of limestone. The blocks which, laid together by their broadest face, form a roof of prodigious weight and solidity, are hollowed out into a vaulted form:—a laborious and primitive method of vaulting for people who certainly understood the principle of the arch. The sculptures on the walls are still clear; and there are strong traces of colour. One superb boat caught my attention. The king, and the ape of Thoth, and some other small figures were in it; and one extremity was ornamented with the ram's horns, while the other had two towers, crowned with the moon.

We walked on, about a quarter of a mile, over mounds of broken pottery and sand, to see such forlorn remains of these two great cities as lie above ground, to grieve and tantalise the eye. A limestone gateway, gaily painted, is partly disinterred; and also the corner portion of some place once lined with alabaster, blocks and fragments of which are lying about. There is a

good deal of red granite,—some sculpture; and two blocks which appear to be the flanks of a pylon. There were some black stelæ and blocks; and plenty of crude brick.—This was all: but I would not, for much, have missed it. Such places are full of interest in any state; —for their monuments, if their monuments remain;— for their desolation, and the harvest of thoughts yielded by that barrenness, if the sand has spread itself over all.

We rode away from the begging Arabs of Arábat, and found a charming spot whereon to take our rest and luncheon. We passed that rare object,—a round, natural-looking pond of blue water, in a basin of the desert, with palms scattered about it: and then we came to a grove where the palms sprang up, straight and lofty, from an expanse of grass of the vivid green of our April turf.—There remained the ride to Girgeh, which occupied three hours and a half. It was all through the same rich plain which we had overlooked from the mounds of Abydus; and the fertility never failed, all the way, except where patches of the coarse grass called halfeh lay here and there between the fields.—Girgeh looked fine as we approached it, with its tall minarets, its thick grove behind, and the range of mountains on the other side of the blue line of river. The rocks were red in the sunset, and the ghostly moon was stealing up behind them as we reached the shore. When the after-glow had died away, and the moon had assumed her glory, it was pleasant to sit watching the currents of the river in the trail of golden light she cast.

CHAPTER XVIII.

BENEE HASAN.—MASGOON.—PYRAMIDS OF DASHOOR AND SAKKARA.—MEMPHIS.—MUMMY PITS.—CONSECRATION OF BRUTES.

It is safe and easy now to visit the caves of Benee Hasan; but it was dangerous or impossible a quarter of a century ago. The village now lies apparently roofless and ruined; but it is still inhabited to a certain extent, and by people of good character. It was formerly a pirate village. When no boat on the river was safe from pillage in passing Benee Hasan, and murders became frequent, Ibraheem Pasha took the matter in hand. He brought his troops round the hills, surprised the place in the night, and shot almost every individual in it,—man, woman and child.

The village is seen from a ravine a little above the caves. From this point, the further view is of the rich valley and its winding river: but the near view is wild enough. Down this ravine trotted a very large fox, which, from its size, looked at first like a jackal. Some of the lower strata of the rocks are worn away, leaving the upper parts overhanging. Strange boulders are perched at intervals along the brink of the ravine, some being cut sheer through, like felled trees; and those which were entire exactly resembling (and they

were all alike) large petrified sheep without their heads. Similar boulders stood at intervals on either side the great road, easily traceable from the front of the caves, which led up the steep, from the boats to the tombs.

Up this road came the funeral processions, to the caves which are opened in the strata of the rock. We must remember how very long ago this was. We must remember that Josephus, in his national vanity, desired to make out that the Hebrews were descended from the Shepherd Race of invaders, and falsified history for the purpose: and then, we must remember that some of these tombs were sealed up before the Shepherd Kings entered Egypt. As that hated host swept conquering by, and perhaps looked up at these rocks as they passed, some of these tombs were occupied and closed,—their walls being covered with the paintings which were before our eyes this day. The tombs I speak of bear date from the latter part of the First Period. They are the oldest known monuments in the country, except the Pyramids.

It is in one of these caves, however, that some people have fancied they have found a procession of Joseph's brethren. It may be natural for those who go from a Christian country, with little other antecedent interest in Egypt than its being the abode of Joseph and his descendants, to look for Hebrew personages on the monuments. But I think such travellers should take some little pains to reflect and observe before they say that they have found them. A very little observation would show that the Egyptians never put on their monuments any thing that they were ashamed of. There are no traces of the Shepherd Race. There are

certainly none of the Hebrews as a nation,—except where the cities of Judah and the captives of Jerusalem come in among the pictures of Sheshonk's conquests. There was no reason for celebrating them while they were neither enemies nor captives, but only the lowest working class in the country. Still less reason was there for representing the brethren of Joseph, who came as individuals or a family, and not as representatives of any nation, or even tribe. It is thus improbable beforehand that the Hebrews should appear on any early monuments.

In the next place, the procession here conjectured to have been one of Hebrew offerers, can be shown, I think, to be a very different set of people indeed. I will presently explain why.—But, further, if the discoveries of Lepsius and the conclusions of Bunsen are right, in relation to the dates of the Three great Periods of Egyptian history (and it would take much power and learning to overthrow them), this particular tomb was painted a thousand years before Joseph was born.—This tomb bears date in the reign of Osirtasen, who is now believed, on new evidence produced by Dr. Lepsius, to be the Sesortasen of the twelfth dynasty of the Monuments; the Sesonchosis of the same dynasty of Manetho. According to the same evidence, the Shepherd Kings came in in the middle of the thirteenth dynasty, remained 926 years, and were then driven out by the great Pharaohs of the eighteenth dynasty; under one of whom Moses led away the Hebrews. The Septuagint declares their residence in Egypt to have lasted 215 years: the Hebrew Chronology gives 430 years. Whichever be preferred, it is

clear that this tomb must have been shut up many hundred years before Joseph was born.

This tomb,—the twenty-ninth from the South, and second from the North,—has a vaulted portico, with two fluted pillars;—beautiful Doric pillars they would have been called, if erected many centuries later. Throughout its chambers, its basement is painted a deep red; and on this basement, and the architraves and everywhere, the hieroglyphics are green; the effect of which is extremely good.—The interior chamber contains the pedestal of a statue. Two longitudinal architraves divide the ceiling of this outer chamber into three portions, which are vaulted, and richly starred. There are three pits in this chamber; and there were four pillars; but they are gone.

It is in this painted chamber that the procession occurs which many have supposed, and all have striven to suppose, might be the arrival of Joseph's brethren. At each end of the row stands a great man. (There is no sitting figure, as some have reported.) The hieroglyphics show that neither of these great men can be Pharaoh or Joseph. The principal figure is named Nefothph; and his parents' names are also given. He is presented as governor of this district, on the east side of the Nile. He is no doubt the owner of the tomb.—The number of persons presented to the king by Joseph was five; and the number who had arrived were seventy: but here we have written up over the heads of the strangers the word "captives" and the number "thirty-seven." The complexions are of the yellow by which the Egyptians designated the whites; the tint of the men's faces being only a little deeper

than that of the women. The men wear beards, tunics, and sandals: the women have their hair long, and bound round the temples. They wear tunics;—one at least with a very handsome Greek border, as we should call it if Greece had existed then; and they are all shod in ancle-boots. Two children's heads emerge from ornamented panniers slung on an ass. The offerings brought are not like what the sons of Jacob would have to give. After a wild goat and gazelle, comes a handsome present of ostriches;—quite a flock of them; and the procession closes with a red man who carries an ibis.—Now, it is curious that no account that I have met with of this celebrated procession has mentioned the ostriches; which are precisely the gift of the whole set which Joseph's brethren could not have brought. And there is no pretence that we could see for stopping short at the ostriches, which join on to the rest of the procession without any interval, and, with the man carrying the ibis, finish the subject.

What shall we say to this omission? And what shall we say to a traveller (Mrs. Romer), who coolly reports, without any apparent shame, that she has brought away from Benee Hasan the head and shoulders of a figure which she does not doubt to be that of a Jewish captive;—her dragoman having cleverly detached from the wall this interesting specimen of antiquity! Where are our hopes for the monuments of Egypt, if passing travellers are to allow their servants, (who know no better), to commit thefts for them in such a way as this? Who will undertake to say what may be the value of any one head and shoulders in a group which may be made unintelligible by its

absence! It is mournful enough to see what scientific antiquarians do;—how one saws through the middle of a tablet of inscriptions; and another knocks down one pillar of a series; and another carries away a group,—symbolical and necessary in its own place: but there really seems no hope left if desultory travellers are to pick and steal at their fancy from a repository where everything has its place, and is in its place.

I visited the whole thirty of these tombs; and found twenty-one which may be called commonplace; by which I mean that they contained the ordinary pits for the reception of bodies, a few niches, a few mock doorways,—which are frequently a form of tablet for inscriptions;—some with remains or traces of pillars; some with small inner chambers; many with slightly vaulted roofs, and usually an architrave to divide the vaulted from the plain part of the ceiling. Where the pillars are gone, the circular bases which are left are so smooth as to perplex one's thought as to what has been done to them:—as smooth as if some dexterous dragoman had sawn through the precious shaft, to indulge his employer with a new toy. The pillars which remain are often very beautiful. In the southern caves, they consist of the stems of four water plants, springing from a large, solid, circular base, and bound together below the capital, which is formed of four lobes of lotus buds.—The polygonal pillars which I have mentioned as being truly Doric have simply a lowly abacus between the shaft and the architrave.

The tombs throughout are not sculptured, except the hieroglyphic inscriptions, but painted on plaster. In many places the plaster seems to have been purposely

broken or scraped away,—so hard is the material, and so vivid the painting, in the corners that are left. This ruin was probably wrought by the Christians, who have elsewhere cut their crosses deep into the very figures on the walls.—Considering the early times, the colours here are various. I found a bright scarlet,—I think for the first time. The women are yellow skinned throughout. There are multitudes of pairs of wrestlers in what are called the military pictures; and these pairs are of a darker and lighter red, so as to show distinctly the intertwining of the lithe limbs. The birds, which are very various, rejoice throughout in a prodigiously gay plumage.

I will not indulge myself, and weary my readers, with going over the nine tombs which we found remarkable and full of interest. I will only just ask those who read to bear in mind the antiquity of these paintings, while I mention a few particulars of them.

We have here the art of writing as a familiar practice, in the scribes who are numbering the stores on every hand. There are ships which would look handsome in Southampton Water, any sunny day. There are glass-blowers who might be from Newcastle, but for their dress and complexion. There are flax-dressers, spinners, weavers,—and a production of cloth which an English manufacturer would study with interest. There are potters, painters, carpenters and statuaries. There is a doctor attending a patient; and a herdsman physicking cattle. The hunters employ arrows, spears and the lasso. The lasso is as evident as on the Pampas at this day.—There is the Nile full of fish, and a hippopotamus among the ooze. There is the bastinado for the men;

and the flogging of a seated woman. Nothing is more extraordinary than the gymnastics and other games of the women. Their various games of ball are excellent. —The great men are attended by dwarfs and buffoons, as in a much later age; and it is clear that bodily infirmity was treated with contempt;—deformed and decrepit personages appearing in the discharge of the meanest offices.—It was an age when this might be looked for; and when war would be the most prominent occupation, and wrestling the prevailing sport; and probably also the discipline of the soldiery: and when hunting, fishing and fowling would be very important pursuits. But then,—what a power of representation of these things is here! and what luxury coexisting with those early pursuits! Here are harpers with their harps of seven strings; and garments and boat-sails with elegant patterns and borders, where, by the way, angular and regular figures are pointedly preferred;—and the ladies' hair, disordered and flying about in their sports, has tails and tassels, very like what may have been seen in London drawing-rooms in no very remote times. The incident which most reminds one of the antiquity of these paintings is that the name of bird, beast, fish or artificer is written up over the object delineated. It is the resource,—not needed here, however, of the artist who wrote on his picture "this is the man," —"this is the monkey." Another barbarism is the same that I have mentioned elsewhere;—that the great man, the occupant of the tomb, has his greatness signified by bigness, being a giant among middle-sized people.

We spent four hours in the diligent study of these tombs; and I ran over the note-worthy nine once

more, to keep them all distinct in my memory. The wind was so high that we could not leave the bank till after sunset; so we had excellent leisure for noting down on the spot what we had seen.

Our letters had lately told us of snow eighteen feet deep in Yorkshire; and at this date (4th of February) I find in my journal that our days were "like August days on Windermere." The thermometer stood at 74° in the shaded cabin in the middle of the day. It had been down to 40°, one cold morning, up the river: but I had never felt any degree of cold that was really uncomfortable; and rarely any heat that could be seriously complained of. The flies were troublesome for some hours in the middle of the day, so as to compel us to sit on deck instead of in the cabin; but they let us alone in the mornings and evenings, which were the only times when I, for one, cared to be in the cabin.

While we stopped at a village for milk, one afternoon, a man came down to us for medical advice. I used to think it one of the prettiest sights we saw when, on such occasions, Mr. E. examined the case with as much care as he would have given to a brother's, and Mr. Y. administered whatever aid could be given. Such offices cannot but abate Mohammedan prejudices against the Christians; and I trust all who go up the Nile endeavour to do their part, with prudence and earnest kindness. Without much quacking,—without danger of doing real harm,—some little relief may be given by simple medicines, and yet more perhaps by sending away the patient with hope in his heart. Any advice or medicine which he may obtain from English travellers is likely to be safer and better than what he will have

at home; and at any rate, he may be granted the cordial of sympathy and good-will.

The wind to-night was high; and it so jostled us against the bank as to destroy sleep. In the morning, we passed another foundered vessel, whose masts just showed themselves above the water.—The river was now less interesting to us than at any previous time. The crocodiles were absent; and the birds were scarcely more numerous than at home. The water had sunk so much, and the hills had so retreated, that the shores looked very flat. Yet we felt rather heavy at heart when we recognised objects,—as the False Pyramid to-day,—which told us that we were drawing near to Cairo. So far from being "bored to death with the Nile," as we had been often threatened, we heartily enjoyed, to the last moment, our boat life, and felt really melancholy when packing up our books and papers for the Cairo hotel. We had still, however, two more days from the present date to spend on board.

On the evening of the 7th we walked on shore at Masgoon, where we stopped in order to visit, the next day, the Pyramids of Dashoor and Sakkára, and the remains of Memphis. When we had passed the village and groves, we saw in the desert such an array of pyramids as justifies Strabo's description of them as being all along the brow of the hills.—The people here look comfortable, though their district is the property of Abbas Pasha, who is not noted for conducing to the comfort of humanity. This village and its lands are a present to him from his grandfather, the Pasha. He gives the people the land, seed, and irrigation, and takes half the produce. Such are the nominal terms, which,

in Egypt generally, are something widely different from the actual bargain. The palms here are very fine. The wool, which the people were spinning and reeling, was white;—the first white wool I remember to have seen. The distaffs were clumsy; but both men and women were as heartily busy as they could have been about better work.—The children were ludicrously afraid of us; and not even baksheesh could reconcile them. We were to them, no doubt, what the dreaded "black man" is to cottagers' children in England. One little boy fled like the wind from the offer of a five para piece; and he could hardly be persuaded to take it from behind his mother's skirts, where he sought refuge. A large quantity of mud bricks was here laid out to dry. They had an unusual proportion of straw in them; so that I believe they would have burned to ashes if set fire to.—This naturally brought to mind the brick-making of the Hebrews, who were from about this time never out of my mind till we reached Damascus. We were on their traces now; and afterwards all through our journeyings in Arabia and Palestine. All the next day I saw them in the plain of Memphis;—saw the remains of the heavy works in which they might have toiled; in the brick-fields, and in the cucumber and melon grounds which yielded the food they so longed for in the Desert. When I looked upon those fruitful plots, neatly fenced with millet stalks; and upon the bright verdure which spread like a carpet beneath the palms,—a carpet of the richest clover;—and upon the blue ponds inland, and the noble river flowing gently between its fertile banks, with family groups basking in the evening sun above the stream, or sitting in the chequered shade of the

acacia groves, I could understand the longing of the Hebrews for a return to Egypt on any terms. From the midst of such a desert as I had seen at Aswán, what is such a scene as this to the memory,—a sunset among palms, ponds, clover-fields, and acacia groves, near the adored Nile! Might not this contrast make any exile as heart-sick to think of as the image of any country under heaven,—unless, going from slavery, he was worthy of the freedom in store for him; which the Hebrews were not, and could not become on a sudden.

While we were on shore this evening, Mrs. Y., who had remained on board, was not without amusement. Our crew, always like children, went to child's play. By Mrs. Y.'s account, it was a capital scene. The Buck took office as Governor; was high and mighty, and had the tax-payers brought before him. There was no end to the bastinado and imprisonment he inflicted on unfortunate debtors, who told such tales of outrageous misfortune as were never heard before. Where our children play school, and naughtiness, and punishment, these men play tax-gathering, mishap, and bastinado.

When we were ready to start, on the morning of the 8th, there was much disputing between Alee and the donkey men: and the sheikh was called to give his opinion. The difficulty was that the men wanted the whole pay (seven piastres per donkey) in advance, which of course Alee was unwilling to give to strangers. He offered half in advance: and I believe it was settled so, at last. The men's plea was that a party of Europeans the day before had agreed to pay seven piastres per donkey; but had at last paid only four, alleging

discontent with the animals. I hope this was not true.

We crossed the rich plain, which was very lively from its being market-day. The assemblage of people was considerable; most of them bringing something to market. The women carried loads like those of their husbands;—baskets of charcoal, from the acacia-groves; tow, wool, kids carried on the shoulder, &c. The women's faces were carelessly covered, or not at all; and we were suddenly struck by the lighter shade of complexion here.

We came abruptly upon the Desert, near the two stone Pyramids of Dashoor. The first, which changes its angle half way up, is the ugliest building I ever saw, being at once clumsy and decrepit in appearance. I saw a wild cat run up the south-west angle, and hide itself among the stones; and Mr. E. had just before seen a large fox. On every side but the north, the stones were rough and broken. One circumstance became thus apparent, which struck me as worth remembering,—the method of joining the blocks by locking them with a stone-key. A square hole on one side of each block being fitted to the corresponding hole of the other, makes an oblong square hole, of course: and an oblong square of stone fitting into it locks them together in one direction, as dovetailing would in two.—On the north side, though the surface was crusted, there was a smoothness and accurate joining of the stone, which showed what the face must once have been. The entrance is at the north; and we saw the square hole; but there is nothing within, it is understood, to tempt the passing traveller to enter,

while so near other pyramids which are worth all the time and effort he has to spare.—The best effect of these pyramids is when one looks up to the glorious sky above them, and sees how sharp and bright they stand out,—the yellow edifice glittering against the blue heaven.

The brick Pyramids of Dashoor are now crumbled down into mere ruin. Yet it is believed by some that the northernmost of these is the one which once bore the proud inscription recorded by Herodotus. The old Pharaoh, of the First Period, Asychis, who built that pyramid (whichever it may be) was prouder of his brick than of any stone edifice,—whether from its novelty, or from its having had a vaulted roof within,—(a trial of the arch, as Dr. Richardson suggests),—there is no saying now: but this is the account Herodotus gives of the matter. "This prince, wishing to surpass all the kings who had reigned in Egypt before him, left for a monument a pyramid of brick, with this inscription cut upon a stone: 'Despise me not, in comparing me with the pyramids of stone. I am as much above them as Jupiter (Amun) is above the other gods: for I have been built of bricks made of the mud brought up from the bottom of the lake!' This is the most memorable thing Asychis did."*

From hence to Sakkára was a ride of about two miles across the Desert. We enjoyed the ride, being aided and braced by a cool wind from the south, which carried us along cheerily. From the first sand-ridge, we saw the white citadel of Cairo, standing finely on its rock, under the Mokuttam range. I was sorry to

* Herod. II. 136.

see it, and to receive its warning that our Nile voyage was just over.

At Sakkára, we found ourselves among the remains of the Necropolis. It was a mournful confusion of whitened skulls, deep pits, mummy rags, and mounds of sand.

It was here that Herodotus rose into his enthusiasm about the grandeur and wisdom of Egypt, and learned most that he knew of its history, and saw the mighty works which glorified the name and memory of Sesostris and other old Pharaohs. It was here that in a later day,—(two-thirds of the centuries which lie between Herodotus and us),—the learned physician of Bagdad saw what transported him with admiration and astonishment, though he complains with indignation of the mischief wrought by treasure-seekers, who were even parting the stones of the edifices for the sake of the copper used in joining them. He looked upon the place as ruined, and mourned over the disappearance of Memphis. What would he think of it now!—Seven centuries ago, Abdallatif wrote thus of the spot we were on to-day:

"Let us now pass on to other traces of the ancient grandeur of Egypt. I am now speaking of the ruins of the old capital of this country, which was situated in the territory of Geezeh, a little above Fostat. This capital was Memphis: it was there that the Pharaohs resided; and this city was the seat of empire in Egypt. It is of this city that we are to understand the words of God in the Kurán, when he is speaking of Moses: *He entered into the city at the moment when the inhabitants were sinking into sleep:* and again: *Moses then went*

forth from the city, full of terror, and looking about him. For Moses made his abode in a village of the territory of Geezeh, a little way from the capital; which village was called Dimouh. The Jews have a synagogue there at this day. The ruins of Memphis now occupy a space which is half-a-day's journey every way. This city was flourishing in the time of Abraham, Joseph and Moses, and a long time before them, and a long time after them." . . . . "As for the idols which are found among these ruins, whether one considers their number or their prodigious magnitude, it is a thing beyond all description, and of which no idea can be conveyed; but there is a thing yet more worthy of admiration; and that is the precision of their forms, the justness of their proportions, and their resemblance to nature." And then this anatomist goes on to show what are the requisites to the perfect representation of the human frame, with its muscular niceties, and continues: "There are some of these statues which hold in their hands a kind of cylinder,—probably a roll of writing: and the artist has not forgotten to represent the folds and wrinkles which are formed in the skin of the hand when it is closed, towards the outer part by the little finger. The beauty of the face of these statues, and the perfect proportions which are observed there, are such as the most excellent art of men alone can effect, and the best that such a substance as stone can receive. There is nothing wanting but the flesh and the blood. The figure of the ear, its orifice, and its sinuosities, is given to perfection.—I have seen two lions placed opposite and near to each other: their aspect inspired terror. Notwithstanding

their colossal size, so far beyond nature, all the truth of form and proportion had been preserved. They have been broken, and covered with earth."—"A man of good sense, seeing all these remains of antiquity, feels disposed to excuse that error of the vulgar which supposes that men of distant ages lived much longer than those of our times: that they were of gigantic stature: and that by means of a wand with which they struck the stones, the stones obeyed their will, and transported themselves wherever they were desired. We remain indeed in a sort of stupor when we consider how much of genius, of resolution and of patience, must have been united with a profound knowledge of geometry, to execute such works; what different instruments from any that we know of must have been employed; and what obstinate labour; and to what point these men have studied the structure of animals and of men." *

These are some few particulars of what Abdallatif saw among these ruins of Memphis, which in his day occupied a space of half-a-day's journey. At the end of seven centuries, the aspect of the place is this. From the village of Mitrahenny (which now occupies the site) can be seen only palm woods, a blue pond, rushes, and a stretch of verdant ground, broken into hollows, where lie a single colossus, a single capital of a column, a half-buried statue of red granite, twelve feet high, and some fragments of granite strewn among the palms. This is all of the mighty Memphis!

The colossus is the celebrated Ramases' statue, given to the British Museum by Signor Caviglia and

* Relation de l' Egypte, Livre I. Ch. 4.

Mr. Sloane, but left in its grassy hollow on account of the expense. It is very beautiful. The serene and cheerful face is like that of the Colossi at Aboo-Simbil, but more beautiful. Each hand holds a scroll, with a cartouche at the end. There it lies, for the Nile to flow over it every year, and the grass to grow up round it when the waters have retired. It lies on its face: but by going down into the hollow, we could obtain a good view of the features, which are as sharp cut, and almost as delicately finished, as any of Chantrey's works at home. The upper part of the statue is somewhat corroded; but the under part retains its polish. If this statue is really the colossus which Herodotus speaks of as erected in front of the temple of Phthah, what a pity it is that further research is not made, and that glorious structure laid open to view from beneath the mounds! Herodotus says that that statue of Sesostris was accompanied by one of his wife, of similar proportions, and by four smaller ones of his sons.* But, if Lepsius is right in believing Sesostris to be a Pharaoh of the First Period, this is not the statue. At all events, there it lies in the mud; likely to be, as Sir G. Wilkinson observes burned for lime, any day, by the Turks.

The view which I obtained from a ridge in the Necropolis was truly dreary. It was at the colourless time of day,—noon: and there was no relief to the white expanse of waste but black and bristling palm tops in clumps, with a slight glimpse of the green beneath. The citadel of Cairo, white, on its white rock, was about a dozen miles off to the north-east; the white city stretching from it westwards,—a slender

* Herod. II. 110.

belt of black palms dividing it from the desert plain on which I stood. A range of white mounds near almost hid the alluvion, beyond which rose the white Arabian hills. All around, and filling up the whole scene to the west, stretched the glaring Desert, oppressing the sense. Yellow "sand ponds," as they are called in my journal, lay between the mounds. To the north-west stood the sharp-shadowed Pyramids of Geezeh; and nearer, those of Abooseer: and close at hand, that of Sakkára.

This Pyramid is built in degrees or terraces; the spaces between the gradations being very wide. Five of these degrees are clearly marked all round; a sixth was traceable by a bit of wall uncovered on the north side: and a deep well was at our feet, on that north side, wherein there is, as we were told, an entrance, probably opening upon a seventh terrace. The sand has hidden a large proportion of this Pyramid: but, making all allowance for that, we saw no great wonder, nor any beauty, thus far.

We next went to the mummy pits; and first into the underground world of ibises. There is no season of Egyptian travel in which one's sensations are more strange than in that spent in mummy pits. Here were underground chambers, pillared, painted, and sculptured, excavated into ornamented recesses, and consecrated to the gods; and destined for the burial of birds.—And then the cats! In a sort of quarry, lay strata of these bodies, the rags fluttering out, and the layers consisting of hosts of cats. The feline population of a whole continent for ages would be required, it seems, to fill these pits. The cats are swathed like

the human body; the ibises are inclosed in red pots, like chimney-pots, with the round end cemented on.

I am far from wondering at the feelings of contempt and disgust expressed by most travellers who visit these pits. I was conscious of some tendency to those feelings in myself: but I think it is necessary to remember here, as in all strange positions of the mind, that we ought to understand before we despise, and that, usually, the more we understand, the less we despise.—Of course, I do not, and never shall, pretend to explain, in any degree, the old Egyptian practices with regard to the consecration of animals: but two or three considerations occurred to me on the spot which appeared to be worth revolving.

The most obvious particular of old Egyptian thought and feeling,—that which presses upon the traveller's notice everywhere among the monuments, so as to compel him to a reiteration of the fact which must be excused in him, is the sacredness of Life, and therefore of Organisation. The evidences of this are sometimes such as our existing morality and taste forbid to be dwelt upon or described to any public, or to any large number who have not been there to witness the simplicity and the solemnity with which this subject is regarded and treated in the monuments: but my own impression is that there is as much work for the philosopher,—the religious philosopher,—in contemplating the ancient ideas of sacred things as for the antiquarian in interpreting the forms of their conveyance: and it may yet perhaps be found that the speculations of the most devout Christian and the most enlightened of the old heathens have the same root, and a development not so different as the superficial might suppose. It may be

seen, sooner or later, that in our reverence for Life, we underrate the facts of Organisation as much as the old Egyptians appear to us to have overrated them, in *their* reverence for Life. The Christian contempt for the body may be found to be an error as great and as mischievous as any heathen worship of it. It may appear that in considering the animal frame, so "fearfully and wonderfully made," as a carcase, a mere shell for the habitation of the principle of Life, to be despised and disparaged as a mere instrumentality of what we call Mind, we are as wrong as any old heathens could be in striving after a factitious immortality for it. For our contempt of the body,—for any species of asceticism,—we are, as far as I can see, without any warrant to be found in Christianity or in true philosophy. In our just reverence for the higher part of man's nature, his powers of thought and feeling, we may be found, at length, to have adopted a false supposition of facts, and to have striven after a separation not warranted by nature between those powers and the animal frame. Wherever this separation of treatment has been aimed at, wherever asceticism has been practised for the good of the soul, the object has failed; and precisely in proportion to men's contempt of the body has been the vitiation of the mind. The whole history of asceticism shows that the mental and moral powers of man sink, or become corrupted, when the bodily frame is treated with indignity and cruelty, quite as certainly as when the animal appetites are unreasonably and unnaturally indulged. And the thoughtful philosopher sees that it must be so. All that we really know is that we know nothing of absolute creation; that we have no evidence

of it, and can form no conception of it: that Life itself is an inexplicable fact to us; that we recognise it only through organisation: and that we have no right, and no power, to conceive of it as apart from organisation; —all our laborious attempts so to conceive of it terminating in imaginations of an organisation more subtle and refined than Nature has presented to our view. On such a subtle and refined organisation a considerable number of men have in all ages fixed their imagination, their hope and their belief: but they have never succeeded in showing any evidence for it, while, in wandering away from the facts of Nature, they have injured their own best powers, and failed of the highest attainments possible to their nature. The highest of human beings, the holiest, and the safest in any event, would be one whose bodily frame was of the highest order originally, the most fully exercised (which includes its being the most perfectly disciplined,) and whose functions of brain were therefore performed in the most perfect manner,—giving him the highest moral and intellectual elevation possible to humanity. In the reverence for Life which would rest upon such a being, the unsophisticated Christian and the devout old Egyptian would meet. Previous to such an encounter, the one might err in holding to his Platonic or Essene notions of a separate soul, clogged with a contemptible and obstructive body, and spurning the notion of its resurrection; and the other might err in regarding every animal frame as such a manifestation of deity as it would be profane to allow to decay: but in actually meeting with the highest example of existence ever offered to their notice, their common reverence for Life

would be gratified to such a degree as to enable each to mend his philosophy, and both to ascertain more carefully than hitherto the ground of fact on which alone true philosophy can be reared.—The Platonising Christians of our time might have sympathy with the ancient philosopher who pointed contemptuously to a dead body, with the words, "See the shell of the flown bird!" but the Corinthian readers of Paul's Epistle would shrink from the saying, as the old Egyptians would; the early Christians from their belief in Paul's doctrine of the Resurrection; and the heathens from their belief that whatever had been gifted with sentient life was for ever sacred.—And if it came to argument between the two, whether the line of sacredness was to be drawn between Man and Brute, it certainly appears to most people now that in reason the Egyptian would have the advantage.—Remembering that the Egyptians grounded their belief in the immortality of life on the constitution of living beings,—on the mystery of their existence at all in the absence of any evidence of absolute creation, we must see that they could not draw a line of separation between any classes of beings who had sentient life. Any exclusion of brutes from the reverence entertained towards Life, and from its quality of immortality, is grounded solely on the plea of a divine revelation that Man shall either not die, or shall live again; and there are not a few devout receivers of this revelation who have refused to exclude brute animals from the condition of immortality:—not a few Christian philosophers who have shrunk from declaring that beings which enjoy the intellectual and moral powers of the dog, for instance, shall be annihilated at death

while Man survives. Such men as some of these are not treated with ridicule or contumely on account of this speculation: and they could hardly treat with ridicule or contumely the Egyptians who in their reverence for the mystery of Life,—the ultimate fact in nature to us all,—treated with serious care its sole manifestation to them and to us,—the organisation of sentient beings.

If the Egyptians ventured upon a step further back than the fact of Life, and assumed it to be a divine particle flowing forth from a self-existent and sole eternal Being, to flow back into its centre on the death of the body, it is clear that no line could be drawn between the human being and the brute, as to the reverence in which the sentient frame was to be held.—It is true, the Egyptians worshipped no human beings; and they did pay religious observance to some brutes. They called their monarchs and great men "gods," explaining that by this they meant to dignify men whom the gods favoured with intercourse and special protection: but they paid no reverential honours to them, as they did to brutes. This seems to have arisen from their reverence for Instinct; which does truly answer to the original idea of inspiration; and is so acknowledged among all such primitive people as those who hold madness and idiotcy sacred. The original idea of inspiration is, exercise of mind without consciousness. Thus, the highest order of genius is with us the nearest approach to inspiration; and among primitive and inexperienced nations, it is the unconscious and involuntary action from ideas which is seen in the idiot Highland child, or the lost Indian Fakeer, or the half-knavish, half-foolish Arabian

derweesh; or, in old times, the magnetised utterer of the oracles, or the spontaneously-prophesying seer. The instinct of animals comes under this head, or appears to do so. It appears to be action of mind unattended by consciousness; and it might well therefore be taken for inspiration: and every action of the creature would then be watched for guidance, and every incident connected with it be accepted for an omen. It is as easily conceivable that the Egyptians, paying homage to beings above and below Man, actually raised the brute with his instinct above Man with his reason, in that one point of view which regarded his inspiration, as that there are men now who look with greater awe upon an idiot or crazed fanatic than on a rational person. In the old case, it was not the brutality, and in the modern case, it is not the folly, that is reverenced: it is the mysterious working of mental faculty, apart from the will, which appears to those ignorant of the powers and functions of the brain to be the communication of Ulterior Thought through an unconscious medium.

We do not know what the Egyptians did with the bodies of animals which they did not hold sacred. Abdallatif could find no remains of the camel, the horse or the ass: and on his inquiring of the old people in the neighbourhood of the Memphis mummy-pits, they hastened to assure him that they had been struck by the absence of all traces of these animals. This absence of all trace is curious in the case of animals which were not eaten.—It is no contradiction of the supposition that the Egyptians reverenced brutes for the possible reasons mentioned above, that they

sacrificed some and ate others. In some cases they chose for sacrifice animals which were hated by the particular Deity in question: as in the case of the red ox. And in eating animals not disliked by the gods, they might have the same idea that lies at the root of cannibalism and human sacrifices, in the South Sea islands, and probably everywhere else. The belief, in such cases, is that the gods wait to imbibe the spirit of the victim; and the idea is that the victim, in passing through the gods, becomes assimilated to their nature, and remains henceforth divine, to the extent of immortality at least, and usually in some other respects. It is thus an honour and blessing to be sacrificed; and the being eaten implies no disrespect to the perishable frame, because the body merely follows the analogy of the spirit's lot; and what is honourable to the one part of the creature cannot be disgraceful to the other. If the nobler part entered into the gods, the meaner might enter into the sons of the gods.

The choice of animals for consecration and preservation was probably determined by the characters of their instinct. Herodotus declines to explain some particulars which were known to him, and which certainly appear to have borne, in his view, a solemn import.—How can we say that it would not have been so with ourselves, if we had stood, with Herodotus, or Plato, or Pythagoras, in the inner apartments of the priests, surrounded by the monuments of their art, and the records of their learning, and favoured with their confidence about matters of the nearest and the most general concern! I own that in the absence of priests and papyri, when all around was dumb and

desolate, and I had no external aid to knowledge but faded pictures of offerings and fluttering mummy rags; I could not resign myself to feelings of disgust and contempt. If I had been on the banks of some South African river, seeing a poor naked savage at his Fetish worship, I must have tried to learn what idea, however low, was at the bottom of his observance: and here, where I knew that men had read the stars, and compassed invisible truths of geometry, and achieved unaccountable marvels of art, and originated, or transmitted, the theologies of the world, I could not despise them for one set of tenets and observances which remains unexplained. I might lament that analogies have been the mischievous Will-o'-the-wisp to the human intellect that they appear to have been in the valley of the Nile, as in the plains of Asia, and the groves of Greece, and the wilderness of Middle Age scholarship in Europe: but this is a sorrow which one feels in every hour of actual study, in any country of the world. I might lament that aspiration, in its young and irrepressible activity, must make so many flights into a dim world of dreams, and come back perplexed and disheartened before it can learn to fly up to the glorious and unfailing light of Nature, to replenish its life: but this regret is only what one feels every day in exploring the only true history of Man,—the history of Ideas. I might lament that the Egyptians should have so framed and illustrated their faith as that it must inevitably become corrupted in its diffusion: but this is the regret which attends the contemplation of the spread of every faith by which mankind has yet been guided. The old Egyptian faith deteri-

orated into worshipping animals; the Jewish into the Pharisaic superstitions and oppressions rebuked throughout the Gospels; and what Christianity has become, among the widest class of its professors, let the temples and congregations of the Greek and Latin churches show. Amidst these natural regrets remains the comfort that the great governing Ideas of mankind, —the guiding lights of the human intellect,—have never failed, and have scarcely suffered eclipse. The great Ideas of Moral Obligation and strict retribution, of the supreme desirableness of moral good, and the eternal "beauty of holiness," pass from system to system, immortalising all with which they assimilate, and finally annihilating all else, dispensing the best blessings that men have ever received, and promising an increase of them in all time to come.

There was nothing else to be seen about this buried city but a tomb or two,—a sarcophagus here,—a mummy-case there.—On our return to the river, we saw sights which did not tend to raise the spirits after the depressing influence of the aspect of old Memphis. We fell in with a wedding procession which was a sad antic exhibition. We saw a great number of men at work upon the causeway which crosses the plain; and a large portion of their work consisted in carrying soil in frail-baskets, and scooping out the earth with their hands. Such is the state of manners and art on the spot where Herodotus held counsel with the wise men of the world, and where the greatest works of Man's hands were reared by means of science and art of which the world is not now capable!

CHAPTER XIX.

VISIT TO THE PYRAMIDS.—ASCENT OF THE GREAT PYRAMID.—INTERIOR.—TRADITIONS AND HISTORY ABOUT THE PYRAMIDS.—THE SPHINX.—FAREWELL TO ANCIENT EGYPT.

THE day was come which I dreaded,—the day of our expedition to the Great Pyramids. I dreaded it, because I feared a sort of disappointment most difficult to bear,—that of failing in the sight-seeing of the day. Since arriving at Thebes, I had not been well; and I had no reason for confidence in my strength, in a place and enterprise so new. I had made up my mind not to be disconcerted if I should have to return without having been either up or into the Pyramid: but I was sorry to open my eyes upon the sunrise that morning. I went over in my mind all the stories I knew of persons who had failed, and felt that I had no better title to success than they. My comfort was in the Sphinx. I should see that, at all events.—It did not mend the matter that I found that a messenger was sent to Cairo for our letters. Three of us had had no letters of a later date than the 5th of November; and this was the 9th of February. I knew that the winter at home was a dreadful one,—for weather, sickness and distress; and never, I think, was I so anxious about letters from

home, or so afraid to receive them. Whatever they might be, however, they would be awaiting me on my return.

We set out for Geezeh at half-past eight, on fine handsome asses, so spirited as to be almost as good to ride as horses. To-day we once more came in sight of that curious sign of civilisation, — shaven donkeys. Dark rings were left round the legs, and the neck and hind-quarters were shaven. The scarlet housings and gay rider made a set-out very unlike what one sees of donkey-riding at home. I was not aware till I came to Egypt how dependent a donkey is on dress.

Our first adventure was being carried on men's shoulders over a muddy pond which stopped the way. We knew that our plague to-day would be from the multitude of country people who would obtrude their services upon us. At this pond the teasing began. Our dragoman met it vigorously, by trying to throw a pertinacious fellow, bigger than himself, into the water. It was a desperate scuffle, such as would make ladies shriek and fly in England: but it came to nothing, as usual. All the rest of the way, men joined us from the fields on either hand, till, when we arrived at the sand, our train was swelled to forty.

I was surprised to find myself disappointed in the Pyramids now, when it had been precisely the reverse at a distance. Instead of their growing larger as we approached, they became less and less wonderful, till at last they exactly met one's preconception, except in being rougher, and of a brighter tint. The platform on which the largest stands is higher than our reading

had given us to suppose; and the Second Pyramid, which at a distance looks as large as the other, here sinks surprisingly. This was to me the strongest evidence of the magnitude of the Great Pyramid. Though I have spoken of disappointment on a near approach, these mighty objects were perfectly absorbing, as a little incident presently proved. One of our party said, on our arrival, "when we were passing the Sphinx ——," "O! the Sphinx!" cried I. "You don't mean that you have seen the Sphinx!"—To be sure they had: and they insisted on it that I had too; —that I must have seen it,—could not have missed it. I was utterly bewildered. It was strange enough to have forgotten it: but not to have seen it was inexplicable. However, on visiting it, later in the day, I found I had seen it. Being intent on the Pyramid before me, I had taken the Sphinx for a capriciously-formed rock, like so many that we had passed,—forgetting that I should not meet with limestone at Geezeh. I rather doubt whether any traveller would take the Sphinx for any thing but a rock unless he was looking for it, or had his eye caught by some casual light.—One other anecdote, otherwise too personal for print, will show how engrossing is the interest of the Pyramid on the spot.—The most precious articles of property I had with me abroad were two ear-trumpets, because, in case of accident happening to them, I could not supply the loss. I was unwilling to carry my trumpet up the Pyramid,—knocking against the stones while I wanted my hands for climbing. So I left it below, in the hands of a trusty Arab. When I joined my party at the top of the Pyramid, I never remembered my trumpet:

nor did they: and we talked as usual, during the forty minutes we were there, without my ever missing it.—When I came down, I never thought of it: and I explored the inside, came out and lunched, and still never thought of my trumpet, till, at the end of three hours and a half from my parting with it, I saw it in the hands of the Arab, and was reminded of the astonishing fact that I had heard as well without it as with it, all that time. Such a thing never happened before, and probably never will again: and a stronger proof could not be offered of the engrossing interest of a visit to the Pyramid.

The Sheikh who met us on the spot, appointed our attendants; — three to each of us. Mr. E. set out first,—waving an adieu to us till we should meet aloft. He mounted with a deliberate, quiet step, such as he could keep up to the end, and reached the summit in seventeen minutes. It took me about five minutes more.

On looking up, it was not the magnitude of the Pyramid which made me think it scarcely possible to achieve the ascent; but the unrelieved succession,—almost infinite,—of bright yellow steps; a most fatiguing image!—Three strong and respectable-looking Arabs now took me in charge. One of them, seeing me pinning up my gown in front, that I might not stumble over it, gave me his services as lady's-maid. He turned up my gown all round, and tied it in a most squeezing knot, which lasted all through the enterprise. We set out from the north-east corner. By far the most formidable part of the ascent was the first six or eight blocks. If it went on to the top thus broken and precipitous, the

ascent would, I felt, be impossible. Already, it was disagreeable to look down, and I was much out of breath. One of my Arabs carried a substantial camp-stool, which had been given me in London with a view to this very adventure,—that it might divide the higher steps,—some of which, being four feet high, seem impracticable enough beforehand. But I found it better to trust to the strong and steady lifting of the Arabs in such places, and, above every thing, not to stop at all, if possible; or, if one must stop for breath, to stand with one's face to the Pyramid. I am sure the guides are right in taking people quickly. The height is not so great, in itself: it is the way in which it is reached that is trying to look back upon. It is trying to some heads to sit on a narrow ledge, and see a dazzling succession of such ledges for two or three hundred feet below; and there, a crowd of diminutive people looking up, to see whether one is coming bobbing down all that vast staircase. I stopped for a few seconds two or three times, at good broad corners or ledges.—When I left the angle, and found myself ascending the side, the chief difficulty was over; and I cannot say that the fatigue was at all formidable. The greater part of one's weight is lifted by the Arabs at each arm; and when one comes to a four feet step, or a broken ledge, there is a third Arab behind. When we arrived at a sort of recess, broken in the angle, my guides sported two of their English words, crying out "Half-way!" with great glee. The last half was easier than the first; and I felt, what proved to be true, that both must be easier than the coming down. I arrived second, and was kindly welcomed to that extraordinary spot by Mr. E.

Mrs. Y. appeared presently after; and lastly, Mr. Y.;—all in good spirits.

I was agreeably surprised to find at the top, besides blocks standing up which gave us some shade, a roomy and even platform, where we might sit and write, and gaze abroad, and enjoy ourselves, without even seeing over the edge, unless we wished it. There was only the lightest possible breeze, just enough to fan our faces, without disturbing us. The reason of our ascending the Pyramid first, before going into it, was that we might take advantage of an hour of calm, and avoid the inconvenience of the wind which might spring up at noon. And most fortunate we were in our weather, and in all other particulars. It was a glorious season, —full of new delight, without drawback;—for I now began to think I might perhaps see the inside of the Pyramid too.

Here are my notes of what we saw from the top;—a height of 480 feet. "Bearings by compass. In a line from us to the North, the hager (sandy plain) joins the fertile land, a blue stream flowing between them, and the line being wavy, and having a sprinkling of palms towards the North. In this northern direction, the green plain extends to the furthest horizon, and over to Cairo eastwards. It is dotted with villages,—clusters of brown houses among palms,—and watered with blue thread-like canals, and showing a faint line of causeway here and there.—E. by N., stands up the citadel of Cairo, the city stretching north-westwards from it. Behind the city, some way round to the N.N.E., is a low ridge of sandy hills: and the other way, southwards, the Mokuttam range, which looks higher the

higher one mounts. Round from hence are sandy hills, with alluvion and canals between them and us, as far as the S.E., where the Nile wanders away, and the Abooseer Pyramids rise. S.S.E. are the Sakkára Pyramids; and from them, round the rest of the landscape, all is desert,—terribly arid and glaring. In the midst of the sand, a train of camels, wonderfully diminutive, is winding along, and a few brown Arab tents are pitched, not far from the foot of the Pyramid. Off our S.W. corner is the Second Pyramid, standing in its sunken area, surrounded by walls, and showing by the casing that is left how much finer these Pyramids must have looked before they were so dismantled.—Beyond this, lies the little one."—This was what we saw; and long we gazed in every direction:—most pathetically perhaps to the South, where we had seen and left so much; or over into the Delta which we should enter no more, and which lay so rich and lovely between our eyes and the horizon, that it seemed to be melting away. We began letters to friends at home, drank some water, intrepidly carried up by a little Arab girl; mounted the highest block, to get as near the sky as we could; and then found that we really must be going down.

The descent was fatiguing; but not at all alarming. Between stepping, jumping, and sliding, with full reliance on the strength and care of the guides, the descent may be easily accomplished in ten minutes;—as far, that is, as the height of the entrance to the Pyramid, which is some way from the bottom. We had bargained before starting that we should not be asked for baksheesh "while going up the Pyramid." Our guides took this literally, and began begging, the

moment we put our feet upon the summit. And all the way down, my guides never let me alone, though they knew I had no money about me. They were otherwise extremely kind, giving me the benefit of their other two words of English. On my jumping down a particularly high block, they patted me on the back, crying, with approving nods, "Ah! ah! good morning; good morning!" I joined my party at the beautiful entrance to the Pyramid, where a large assemblage of Arabs was ranged on the rising stones opposite to us, like a hill-side congregation waiting for the preacher.

I resolved that morning not to be induced by any pleasure or triumph of the hour to tell people that it is very easy to go up and into the Pyramid. To determined and practised people it is easy; but not, probably, to the majority. I would not recommend any one to to do it of whose nerve I was not sure. To the tranquil, the inside of the Pyramid is sufficiently airy and cool for the need of the hour. But it is a dreadful place in which to be seized with a panic: and no woman should go who cannot trust herself to put down panic by reason. There is absolutely nothing to fear but from one's self; no danger of bad falls, or of going astray, or of being stifled. The passages are slippery: but there are plenty of notches; and a fall could hardly be dangerous,—unless at one place,—the entrance upon the passage to the King's Chamber. We knew beforehand that there were air passages from that chamber to the outside; and when I walked about before examining the place, and questioned my senses, I was surprised to find how little oppressive heat, and how much air there really was. The one danger is from the impression

upon the senses of the solidity and vastness of the stone structure in such darkness. Almost any nerves may be excused for giving way under the sight of that passage and that chamber;—the whole, even the roof, being constructed of blocks of dark granite, so joined as that the edge of a penknife could not be inserted between them. The passage runs up, a steep inclined plane, with its lines on either hand, and its notches in front, retiring almost to a vanishing point, other grooves and projections high up the side walls apparently coming down to the same vanishing point, and all closed in by the ponderous ceiling, at such a height as to be well nigh lost in gloom. The torches of the Arabs glare near the eye, and perplex the vision by their fitful shining on the granite walls; and at the same time, the lights in advance or far behind are like waving glow-worm sparks. There is nothing else like it;—no catacomb or cavern in the world; there never was, and surely there never will be. I have spent the greater part of two days in the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky; a place generally considered awful enough: but compared with this, it was like a drawing-room to a cellar. The fantastic character of its walls and roofs takes off from the impression of its vastness and gloom. Here, the symmetry and finish so deepen the gloom as to make this seem like a fit prison-house for fallen angels. Notwithstanding the plain view we obtained in the chamber of the enormous longitudinal blocks of the ceiling, the impression was less tremendous than in the descending passage, from the inferior vastness.—There is nothing but the structure itself to be seen, except the sarcophagus near one end. It is sadly broken: but it still rings like a bell,

when struck on the side.—The granite is blackened by time; but its grain is seen where it has been chipped by those who were in search of the air-holes.—The prodigious portcullises of granite in the passage were more visible to us in going down than in ascending: and how they came there was an oppressive speculation in itself. It must be remembered that this structure, with its wonderful art and bewildering grandeur, was the work of the men of five thousand years ago. It dates from the earlier part of the First Period, and is the oldest monument known to exist in the world. If this is, to us, the beginning of the Arts,—this, which manifests the existence of so many appliances of art unknown to us now, how are we to speculate on what went before? and how completely do we find ourselves thrown out in all our notions of the duration of the human race!

On returning, two of our party had had enough of Pyramid searching. I and another had not; and we proceed to the Queen's Chamber, along the passage, above which we had ascended to the King's. This passage was not so low as we had expected. It only required us to walk stooping. The chief interest about the Queen's Chamber is from its being under the apex of the Pyramid; which the King's is not. Its ceiling is on this account pointed, like the great entrance. There are also five small, rough chambers above it, evidently put there to lessen the superincumbent weight. Though this chamber is smaller than the King's, it seems to be distinguished by being under the apex; and also by a niche, rather elaborately wrought. A pit has been opened below this niche, by searchers, and the rubbish

thrown into a corner. Sir G. Wilkinson wishes that, if further search is made here for the king's body, it should be by looking *under* this niche. My great desire would be to have the Pyramid explored down to the lowest part where any traces of works could be found. Works carried down so low must have some purpose; and it might be well worth our while to discover what. It is not satisfactory to my mind to suppose the "subterranean structures" intended merely to let the workmen out, after they had closed the upper passage with its granite portcullis. The great difficulty, in exploring the Pyramid,—after the expense and toil of getting to work at all,—is from the wonderful way in which these ancient builders closed the passages. Their huge granite portcullises, blocking up the way, are almost insuperable. It is hard to distinguish them from other blocks, and to guess when there is a passage behind; and then it is very hard to get round them.—I have a strong impression myself that, after all the wonders our pains-taking and disinterested antiquarian travellers have laid open, there is much more behind, and that the exploration of the Pyramid is only just begun. If it be true that some one fired a pocket-pistol within the Pyramid, and that the echoes were countless,—the reverberation going on for an astonishing length of time,—it seems as if the edifice might be honey-combed with chambers. But for these unmanageable granite portcullises, what might we not learn!

It becomes us, however, to be grateful for what we have learned. Colonel Howard Vyse has laid the world under great obligations by his generous and

laborious exertions. He made, among many discoveries, one of inestimable importance. He found inscribed in the Pyramid, in the most antique style, the names of the Pharaohs who raised these edifices: and they turn out to be the same given by Herodotus and Manetho. It is now ascertained, beyond all doubt, that these Pyramids are the work of Pharaohs of the fourth dynasty;—that is, of kings early succeeding Menes, and living near the beginning of the First Period of Egyptian history.

I suppose every one knows the account given by Herodotus of the building of this pyramid;—how Cheops closed the temples, stopped the sacrifices, and made every body work for him:—how some quarried the stone in the Arabian hills, and others conveyed it to the river, and over a bridge of boats; and others drew it to the spot where it was wanted:—and how it could be carried and mounted only by a causeway which of itself took ten years to construct, and which was a fine work, with its polished stones and figures of animals engraved on them:—how 100,000 men were employed at a time, and were relieved by the same number at the end of three months:—how, besides the ten years occupied by the causeway, much was required for levelling the rock on which the edifice stands, and twenty years for the building of the pyramid itself:—how a machine, made of short pieces of wood, was placed on every step, as the work proceeded, to raise the stones for the step above; and how the filling in of these gradations, forming the last smooth surface, was begun from the top:—how this surface bore engraved, so that Herodotus himself saw it, an inscription which told

the expense of the vegetables eaten by the labourers during the progress of the work; and how confounded the traveller declares himself to be, judging from the sum spent in vegetables, at the thought of the expenditure further necessary for the rest of the food and the clothes of the workmen, and their iron tools, during the long course of years required for the whole series of works,—amongst which, by the way, he includes the "subterranean structures" which he again mentions, as made by the king, "for purposes of sepulture, in an island formed by the waters of the Nile, which he introduced into them by a canal."*

All this narrative, thus briefly glanced at, is known to every body who cares about Egypt: and every body has no doubt been struck by this testimony to the use of iron tools, and the existence of polished stones, machinery, writing and engraving, between five and six thousand years ago.—But every body may not know what evidence we have of the solidity and extraordinary vastness of these works, in the impossibility which has been found of taking them to pieces. This evidence we have through our useful middle-age witness, Abdallatif, whose book is so little known that I may be rendering a service by translating some passages relating to his visits to the Pyramids in or about A.D. 1190.

Abdallatif begins with the same thought which suggested the noble saying, "All things dread Time: but Time dreads the Pyramids." He says—

"The form which has been adopted in the construction of the Pyramids, and the solidity which has been

* Herod. II. 124.

given them, are well worthy of admiration. It is to their form that they owe the advantage of having resisted the hostility of centuries: or rather, it seems as if it were Time which has resisted the opposition of these eternal edifices. Indeed, when we meditate deeply on the construction of the Pyramids, we are compelled to acknowledge that men of the greatest genius have here employed in combination their best powers; and that the subtlest minds have exhausted their deepest resources; that the most enlightened souls have exercised in profusion all the abilities that they possessed which could be applied to these constructions; and that the wisest theory of geometry has employed all its means to produce these wonders, as the last point of astonishment which it was possible to reach. Thus we may say that these edifices speak to us now of those who reared them, teach us their history, open to us in an intelligible manner the progress which they had made in the sciences, and the excellence of their abilities:—in a word, they put us in possession of the life and actions of the men of those days."*—After telling how the Pyramids are placed with a regard to the points of the compass, and how this breaks the force of the wind, and what the gross measurements are, he goes on:—"Their pyramidal figure is truncated; and the summit offers thereby a level of ten cubits every way. Here is a thing which I myself observed. When I visited them, there was in our party an archer, who let fly an arrow in the direction of the perpendicular height of one of these

* Relation de l' Egypte, Livre I. ch. 4.

Pyramids, and in that of its thickness (its base:) and the arrow fell a little short of midway.* We learned that in the neighbouring village there were people accustomed to mount the pyramid, who did it without any difficulty. We sent for one of these men; and for a trifle which we gave him, he set off up the pyramid, as we should to mount a staircase, and even quicker, without putting off either his shoes or his garments, which were very ample. I had desired him to measure, with his turban, the area at the top, when he got there. When he came down, we took the measure of his turban, as it answered to that of the area at the summit. We found it to be eleven cubits, by the measure of the original cubit."—It does not seem to have occurred to the grave physician to go up himself. It is a pity that he could not know that ladies would accomplish the feat, seven centuries after him. If he had looked abroad from the summit, what would he have done for words to express his raptures! He goes on to show how much less he dared than we:—

"One of these two pyramids is open, and offers an entrance by which the interior may be visited. This opening leads to narrow passages, to conduits which go down to a great depth, and to wells and precipices, as we are assured by such persons as have courage to explore them: for there are many people who are tempted by a foolish avarice and chimerical hopes into the interior of this edifice. They plunge into deep recesses, and come at last to a place where they find

* It is well known that the ground covered by the Great Pyramid is equal to the area of Lincoln's Inn Fields, and 50 feet over, every way;—say, Lincoln's Inn Fields and the row of surrounding houses.

it impossible to penetrate further. As for the most frequented and ordinarily-used passage, it is a glacis which leads to the upper part of the pyramid, where there is a square chamber; and in this chamber a sarcophagus of stone."

Up to a recent date, there have been doubts whether the pyramid was open so long ago as this, and whether therefore the tradition was true which declares that Caliph Mamoon opened it, somewhere about A.D. 820. It is clear that in Abdallatif's time there was no novelty in its standing open: and there seems no reason to doubt the narrative given by Arab writers of the opening by Caliph Mamoon. One of them, Abdel Hôkm, declares that a statue resembling a man (a mummy-case, no doubt,) was found in the sarcophagus; and within the statue, a human body, with a breast-plate of gold and jewels, bearing written characters which no one understood. Abdallatif says—

"The opening by which the interior of the pyramid is reached at this day is not the original entrance; it is a hole begun at random, and made by force. It is said it was the Caliph Mamoon who made it. The greater part of our company entered it, and went up to the higher chamber. When they came down, they gave marvellous accounts of what they had seen; and they said that this passage was so full of bats and their dirt that it was almost stopped up: that the bats were nearly as large as pigeons; and that there were to be seen in the upper part, open spaces and windows which seemed to have been intended to admit air and light.—In another visit which I made to the Pyramids, I entered this interior passage with several persons, and

went about two-thirds of the way along it: but having become insensible through the fear which struck me in this ascent, I came down again, half dead.

"These pyramids are constructed of great stones, from ten to twenty cubits long, and two or three cubits in the breadth and thickness. The most admirable particular of the whole is the extreme nicety with which these stones have been prepared and adjusted. Their adjustment is so precise that not even a needle or a hair can be inserted between any two of them. They are joined by a cement laid on to the thickness of a sheet of paper. I cannot tell what this mortar is made of, it being of a substance entirely unknown to me. *These stones are covered with writing in that unknown character whose import is at this day wholly unknown.* I have not met in Egypt with any person who could say that he knew, even by hearsay, of any one who understood this character. *These inscriptions are so multitudinous, that if those only which are seen on the surface of these two pyramids were copied upon paper, more than ten thousand pages would be filled with them.*"

For "pages," Pococke here translates "books." When we remember that Abdallatif is telling us what he himself saw, we cannot but admit this particular of his simple narrative. He goes on,

"I have read in some books of the ancient Sabeans, that, of these two pyramids, one is the tomb of Agathodemon, and the other that of Hermes. These are, they say, two great prophets; but Agathodemon is the older and greater of the two. They say that from all the countries of the world, people come in pilgrimage to

these two pyramids. — In my great work, I have enlarged upon this subject; and I have related what others have said of these edifices. To that account I refer those who desire further details. Here, I limit myself to what I have myself seen.

"When Melic-alaziz Othman-ben-Yousouf had succeeded his father, he let himself be persuaded by some of his courtiers,—foolish people,—to demolish these pyramids: and they began with the red* pyramid, which is the third and smallest of the three great pyramids.

"The Sultaun sent there his sappers, miners and quarrymen, under the superintendence of some of the principal officers and first Emirs of his court, and gave them orders to destroy it. To execute these orders, they established their camp near the pyramid: they collected there a multitude of labourers from all quarters, and maintained them at great cost. They remained there eight entire months, occupied, with all their people, in executing their commission, carrying away, each day, after extreme exertion and exhaustion, two or three stones. Some pushed them from above with wedges and levers, while others drew them away from the base with ropes and cables. Whenever one of these stones fell, it made a fearful noise, which echoed far off, shook the earth, and made the hills tremble. By its fall, it was buried in the sand; and then, great efforts were made to remove it: after which the people wrought grooves for the wedges to enter; and thus the stones were split into several pieces:— then each fragment was placed upon a car, to be

* So called from its being made of red granite.

carried to a mountain a little way off, and thrown out at its foot.

"After the company had remained a long time encamped on this spot, when their pecuniary means were all expended, while their trouble and fatigue went on increasing, and their resolution growing weaker, day by day, and their strength was utterly exhausted, they were obliged ignominiously to quit their enterprise. Far from obtaining the result they had anticipated, and succeeding in their design, they ended by doing nothing but spoiling the pyramid, and evidencing their own powerlessness. This passed in the year 593 (A.D. 1196). When one now looks at the stones brought down in the course of the demolition, one is persuaded that the pyramid has been destroyed from its foundation: but when, on the other hand, one looks up at the pyramid, one believes that it has suffered no injury whatever, and that nothing has happened but the paring off of a portion of the casing on one of its sides.

"Observing one day what extremely heavy work it was to remove a single stone, I addressed one of the superintendents who was directing the workmen, and put this question to him—'If any one offered you a thousand pieces of gold to replace one of these stones, and adjust it as it was before, do you think you could accomplish it?' His answer was that if many times as much was offered, they could not do such a thing; and this he affirmed with an oath."*

I fear that all such descriptions are thrown away, in regard to the object of giving to the readers of them

* Relation de l'Egypte, Livre I. ch. 4.

any idea of what the Pyramids are. They are useful as records, however, and extremely interesting to travellers in going over the ground. As for the impression,—there is nothing like the momentary sensation of seeing the blue daylight at the top of the entrance passage, when one is on one's way out. More real astonishment is felt at that moment than from reading all the descriptions of all authors.

After resting for luncheon on a block on the east side of the Pyramids, we visited some tombs, very interesting from their extreme antiquity, but too much like those of Benee Hasan to justify description here. The preparations for feasts, numbering stock, &c., go on here as elsewhere, showing that people lived, between five and six thousand years ago, much as they do now.—It was hereabouts that that precious ring was found which ought to be in the British Museum, but which remains in the hand of Dr. Abbott, at Cairo,—the gold ring of Cheops, with his cartouche cut upon it. In Dr. Abbott's possession too are some gold ornaments with "Menes" marked upon them. Treasures of such singular value as these should surely be national property.

And now the time was come for visiting the Sphinx. What a monstrous idea was it from which this monster sprang! True as I think Abdallatif's account of it, and just as is his admiration, I feel that a stranger either does not see the Sphinx at all, or he sees it as a nightmare. When we first passed it, I saw it only as a strange looking rock; an oversight which could not have occurred in the olden time, when the head bore the royal helmet or the ram's horns. Now I was half-afraid of it. The full serene gaze of its round face,

rendered ugly by the loss of the nose, which was a very handsome feature of the old Egyptian face;—this full gaze, and the stony calm of its attitude almost turn one to stone. So life-like,—so huge,—so monstrous,—it is really a fearful spectacle. I saw a man sitting in a fold of the neck,—as a fly might settle on a horse's mane. In that crease he reposed, while far over his head extended the vast penthouse of the jaw; and above that, the dressed hair on either side the face,—each bunch a mass of stone which might crush a dwelling house. In its present state, its proportions cannot be obtained; but Sir G. Wilkinson tells us * "Pliny says it measured from the belly to the highest part of the head sixty-three feet: its length was one hundred and forty three: and the circumference of its head round the forehead one hundred and two feet; all cut out in the natural rock, and worked smooth." Fancy the long well-opened eyes, in such proportion as this,—eyes which have gazed unwinking into vacancy, while mighty Pharaohs, and Hebrew law-givers, and Persian princes, and Greek philosophers, and Anthony with Cleopatra by his side, and Christian anchorites, and Arab warriors, and European men of science, have been brought hither in succession by the unpausing ages to look up into those eyes,—so full of meaning, though so fixed! We have here a record of the Egyptian complexion, or of the Egyptians' own notion of it, as well as of the characteristic features of the race. There is red paint on the face, of the same tint as the complexions in the tombs. The face is (supposing the nose restored) much like the Berber countenance. The long

* Modern Egypt and Thebes, I. 356.

mild eye, the thick, but not protuberant lips, (lips like Malibran's, and like no others that I ever saw in Europe) and the projecting jaw, with the intelligent, gentle expression of the whole face, are very like what one sees in Nubia at every village. That man sitting in the fold of the neck was a happy accident. It enabled one to estimate proportions, when looking up from below: and to learn how it was that religious processions marched up between its paws to the temple sheltered by its breast. I could see how the sanctuary and altar of sacrifice might very well stand there, so towered over by the neck and head as that the savour of the sacrifices might rise straight up into its nostrils. The granite tablet above this altar is visible, peeping out of the sand in the hollow. The ridge of the back is above ground, and I walked along it from the neck to the root of the tail.—If only the paws could be kept uncovered, it would much improve our conception of this strange work,—perhaps, as my journal observes, the strangest object I ever saw.

While riding away, I turned to give a last look, and was struck with the ugliness of the scene. The Pyramids lessened in height from north to south, and were scattered about without evident plan: tombs yawned in the yellow rocks:—the Sphinx lay low, and seemed to belong to nothing; and the whole vast, desolate circuit of monuments was incumbered by rubbish.—This was my last glimpse into the ancient world, except that I had the obelisk at Heliopolis yet to see. This was my last clear view into the times of the vanished race. As I turned my face towards Cairo, the cloud curtain was again drawn over the living and

moving scene which I had studied for so long: and anything more that I might learn must be by thought, and not by sight.

The amount of what one does learn by the eye is very great;—really astonishing in the case of a people whose literature is lost, instead of remaining as an indication of what one is to look for, and a commentary on what one sees. What do we not owe to their turn for engraving and painting! Here is a people remaining only, as one may say, in the abstract!—living only in the ideas they have bequeathed to us, and in the undecayed works of their hands. No one of that great race survives: we have their corpses in plenty; but not a breathing man left of them all. We do not know what their complexion was: their language is lost, except as studious men pick it up, word by word, with painful uncertainty, from an obscure cypher. But, phantoms as they are to us, how much do they teach us!

They teach us to be modest and patient in regard to our knowledge of the ancient world, by showing us that while we have been talking confidently of the six thousand years of human existence, and about who was who in the earliest days, we have in reality known nothing about it. They rebuke us sufficiently in showing us that at that time men were living very much as we do;—without some knowledge that we have gained, but in possession of some arts which we have not. They confound us by their mute exhibitions of their iron tools and steel armour; their great range of manufactures, and their feasts and sports, so like our own. In their kitchens they decant wine by a syphon, and strew their

sweet cakes with seeds, and pound their spices in a mortar. In the drawing-room, they lounge on chaises-longues, and the ladies knit and net as we do, and darn better than we can. I saw at Dr. Abbott's a piece of mending left unfinished several thousand years ago, which any Englishwoman might be satisfied with or proud of. In the nursery the little girls had dolls; jointed dolls, with bunchy hair and long eyes; as our dolls have blue eyes and fair tresses. And the babies had, not the woolly bow-wow dogs which yelp in our nurseries, but little wooden crocodiles with snapping jaws. In the country we see the agriculturists taking stock; and in the towns, the population divided into castes, subject to laws, and living under a theocracy, long before the supposed time of the Deluge. There is enough here to teach us some humility and patience about the true history of the world.

We almost lose sight of the evidences of their ways that they have left us in recognising the Ideas that they have recorded and transmitted. Here they were, nearly two thousand years before the birth of Abraham, worshipping One Supreme God, and owning him for their King, appointing for his agent and chief servant as their ruler, a priest whom they called his son. They recognised his moral government;—always strictly a moral government, through how many hands soever it might be administered—whether those of his personified attributes, or those of his human instruments. The highest objects set before these people were purity of life and rectitude of conduct. Their highest aspirations were directed to the glory and favour of God in this life, and acceptance by him hereafter. Their

conceptions of death were that it was a passage to an eternal existence, where a divine benefactor, sent to dispense the mercies of the Supreme, had gone before them, having submitted to death, in order to overcome the power of evil, and who had therefore been raised from among the dead, when his probation in Hades was ended, and made the eternal Judge of the living and the dead. Those whom he judged favourably had their names written in the book of Life, and were brought to taste of the tree of Life, which would make them to be as gods: after which they were to enjoy such bliss as it has not entered into men's hearts to conceive. The wicked were meanwhile to undergo shame and anguish till they had expiated the very last sin, or were to be destroyed.

They believed the creation to have taken place as they annually saw re-creation take place. They said that the Spirit of the Supreme moved on the face of the waters; and that the dry land appeared at his bidding, yielding vegetation first, and then animals. They believed in a substantial firmament, wherein the sun and moon were placed, which were privileged to travel, with the spirits of the virtuous in their train, through a long series of Mansions in the great abode of the Supreme.—They taught that every mind, whether of man or brute, was an emanation from the Supreme; and that the body was only its abode and instrument; the soul being, from its nature and derivation, immortal.

Such were the Ideas transmitted to other countries and to future races by this very ancient people. That such were their ideas, we know by a far surer medium

than tradition;—though that also is not wanting. By the hearing of the ear, and the sympathy of the mind they transmitted these Ideas in their living force. By their sculptures, their paintings and their legends they immutably recorded them.

All knowledge is sacred. All truth is divine. It is not for us to mix up passion and prejudice with our perception of new facts. We may not like to be perplexed by new knowledge which throws us out of some notions which we took for knowledge before. We are apt to feel our own spiritual privileges lessened by its appearing that they were held for many ages before the time which we had supposed. It might be enough to leave the minds of students of the past to subside and grow tranquil, (as minds always do, sooner or later,) in the sublime presence of facts: but I would just ask whether the great guiding Ideas of mankind are the more or the less venerable for having wrought for some thousands of years longer than we had imagined; and whether it is or is not a testimony to the power of those Ideas that they raised into spiritual light a race which thereby became the greatest in the ancient world, preserved their empire through a longer duration than that of any other known people, and were made the source of enlightenment to nations then and still unborn. If, weak in our partial knowledge, and in the prejudices of our whole lives, we need reconciling to the facts of the Egyptian history of Mind, I think these testimonies to the power and saving character of these venerable Ideas may have a cheering efficacy, and can have no other.

Here, as I said, the volume of ancient Egyptian

history was closed to us. We had Cairo before our eyes as we rode away, and found letters from England on board our boat :—happy letters which were a rebuke to our anxiety :—at least I may say this for myself.

We were not injuriously fatigued by our most successful excursion :—rather tired in the evening, and very stiff the next day; but nobody ill, and everybody well satisfied.—It was no satisfaction to any of us that our Nile voyage was over: but this was an inevitable misfortune; and we bore it as well as we could.

CHAPTER XX.

INUNDATION OF THE NILE.—FAMINE IN EGYPT.

We hear so much of the regularity of the overflow of the Nile, that we are apt to forget that it may fail, or to contemplate the consequences in such a case. It is true, we read of the seven years of famine in Joseph's time: but we think of that as a kind of miracle, and do not ask whether such a misfortune ever happened again, when a less sagacious and politic minister than Joseph was at the head of affairs. There is some information extant about this; and it may be of sufficient interest to justify us in dwelling upon it a little.

It is amusing to observe how, according to Herodotus, the Egyptians and Greeks pitied each other for their respective ways of having their lands watered. The priests told Herodotus of a time when a rise of eight cubits sufficed to water the land below Memphis; whereas "now," he says,* "if the river does not rise sixteen cubits,† or at least fifteen, it does not cover

* Herod. II. 13.

† The priests were possibly speaking of a different measure from the cubit of the time of Herodotus. The cubit originally signified the length from the bend of the elbow to the end of the middle finger. It is believed that among the Hebrews there were two cubit-measures;—one of 18 inches, and the other of 21 inches. Sir G. Wilkinson gives the cubit at the Nilometer at Elephantine as measuring 1⅝ ft.—*i.e.*, 19½ inches. There were 28 digits in a cubit.

the fields. If the land continues to rise in the same proportion,"—(a proportion which he calculated on mistaken dates, as the event has shown), "and to receive the same augmentations as hitherto, the Nile no longer covering it with its waters, it seems to me that the Egyptians who dwell below Lake Mœris, and in other districts, and especially in what is called the Delta, must continually experience at last the same fate as that with which they suppose the Greeks to be threatened, sooner or later: for, having learned that the whole of Greece is watered by rains, and not by the inundation of the rivers, as in their country, they say that if the Greeks should ever be disappointed of their hopes, they would run the risk of perishing miserably by famine. By this they mean to convey that if, instead of raining in Greece, there should come a drought, they would die of hunger, because they have no other resource than the waters of the sky.—This reflection of the Egyptians upon the Greeks is just: but now let us see to what extremity they themselves may be reduced. If it should happen, as I said before, that the region below Memphis, which is that which receives accumulations, should go on rising as it has done hitherto, must it not certainly happen that the Egyptians who inhabit it must experience the horrors of famine, since it does not rain in their country, and the river can no longer overspread their fields? But there is nobody now, in the rest of Egypt, or even in the whole world, who obtains a harvest with less care and toil."—After all these wise and kind apprehensions on each other's account, the people of neither of the two countries have seen the other lapse into desert, or

the inhabitants exterminated by a permanent failure of water. Seedtime and harvest have not yet ceased.—In Egypt, however, they have intermitted: and terrible have those seasons been. Abdallatif's account of one of them is dreadful to read, at the end of nearly seven centuries.

One is filled with astonishment at the constancy of the overflow, and the regularity of its amount, when one learns what are the consequences of a small diminution or excess of the ordinary quantity; and perhaps it is as perplexing to men of science as to other people that such regularity should accrue from any such sources as those to which the inundation of the Nile has yet been attributed. If the Messrs. Abbadie should return in safety to Europe, to tell us what they believe they have discovered respecting the fountains of the Nile, we may know something ere long which may relieve our perplexity. Meantime, it appears to us one of the chief wonders of the natural world that the mountains of Abyssinia should so punctually gather the clouds about them, and entice the rains, as to send out streams of the same force, which shall water two thousand miles of country to within a few inches of the same height, and a few hours of the same time, year by year, for as many ages as are known to man.

The highest point reached by the inundation, and very rarely reached, is a little above nineteen cubits. In this case, much cultivable land remains so long submerged that the sowing cannot take place; and it is as barren as the desert for that year, while some spots which are ordinarily dry yield a harvest for once. Of course, there is a great destruction of dwellings and of

stock in this case.—When the rise reaches eighteen cubits, there is great rejoicing, for the produce is then sufficient for two years' consumption, after the government dues are paid. When it reaches sixteen cubits, there is enough produce for the wants of the year; and this was called, in Abdallatif's time, "the Sultaun's flood," because then the Sultaun claimed his taxes.—Below sixteen cubits, there is more or less scarcity. In such a case, the south wind has prevailed: and in good years, the north.

The lowest Nile ever known seems to have been that of A.D. 966, when the waters rose only to twelve cubits, seventeen digits: and the next lowest was in A.D. 1199, when it rose only four digits higher. For four centuries before the earliest of these dates, the Nile had only six times failed to reach fourteen cubits; and about twenty times only had it stopped short of fifteen cubits.—The inundation begins about the 25th of June, and reaches its height in three months. It remains stationary about twelve days, and then begins to subside.

Niebuhr gives a full account of popular methods of divination as to what the Nile will be pleased to do that year. The Mohammedans believe, he says,* that the fall of a drop of water from heaven upon a place in Abyssinia is the cause of the inundation; and that this drop falls on the night of the 17th and 18th of June. As the Mohammedan months vary, they use the Coptic time for this calculation. On that night, about every second house in Cairo had, in Niebuhr's time, a piece of paste laid out upon the roof; and if it was found

* Voyage en Arabie, tom. I. p. 104.

heavier in the morning than at night, it was a settled matter that the Drop had fallen in Abyssinia, and that there would be a good Nile." We should suppose this to be owing to a heavy dew: but the people would have it that it was of no consequence whether the paste was laid out within the house or on the roof.—Another method was to expose equal weights of dry Nile soil and water; if, in the morning, the earth had sucked up all the water, it would be a sterile year; if any remained, there would be a good flood. Niebuhr tried this experiment repeatedly; and there was always water remaining: whence he drew the conclusion that the soil of the valley will not absorb its own weight of water.—Another popular method of divination was to set out on the house-tops at night, little paper-boxes containing a small portion of wheat. Each box was inscribed with the name of a Coptic month; and all were of equal weight. The box which was heaviest in the morning showed in what month the inundation would reach its height. As was natural, the people tried to learn a little more while they were about it; and some fortune-telling was joined with the other experiments. The best informed people laughed at the whole matter as an amusement of the women: but nevertheless, about every other house in Cairo had something laid out upon its roof on the night of the 17th of June.—The Christians were in no way behind the Mohammedans in their experiments. They had their paste and their Nile soil, and their calculations of uncertain times, connecting their observances, however, with their saints' days. They professed a caution greater than their neighbours thought of; declaring

that unless three of their experiments yielded the same result, none were to be relied on.

The people dreaded falling stars at this time of year. Learned men said that if they all tended to the same point of the heavens, this indicated only what winds would prevail: and the winds are largely concerned in the inundation. Learned and ignorant seem to have agreed that if these meteors abounded in the whole sky, it was a forewarning of a low Nile; and also of political troubles. In A.D. 902, fiery meteors filled the air: and lo! the Nile rose only to thirteen cubits, and the dynasty of the Tooloonides was overthrown; the last of them reigning only ten days. Again, in A.D. 912, the same signs occurred, and were followed by scarcity and civil war. Abdallatif observes, after quoting the chronicler who tells these things, "These are certainly very strong indications; but they are common to all countries, and not peculiar to Egypt. But we observed the same things in this year (A.D. 1199). At the beginning of the year (Mohammedan) stars darted across the sky; and at the end, the waters were very low: and in this same year, the Sovereign who ruled in Egypt was dethroned by his uncle Melic-aladel, after they had been at war." He tells us elsewhere, however, that an ambassador from Abyssinia brought to Cairo, in August of that year, a letter from his sovereign, (about appointing a new Patriarch in the place of the one who had just died;) in which letter it was stated that the rains had that season been very moderate; and that this was the reason of the lowness of the Nile.

It is a sign of a bad inundation if the waters of the

river have a green tinge and a bad odour at the time of the visible rise of the flood. The aquatic mosses and vegetable fibres which occasion this corrupt state of the water ought to be carried away quickly by the force of the current sweeping through, and washing out, the stagnant pools and nooks of the damp shores. It is a bad sign if the current is so low and lazy as merely to float this corruption. In the first year of dearth of which Abdallatif gives an account, the water was insufferable to the taste and smell; and all who could had recourse to well-water. He boiled the Nile water; but that only made it worse: and when he let a portion stand in a narrow-necked bottle, and then took off the scum, he found the water, though then clear, as fetid as ever. This plague lasted, in that terrible year, all through June and July and part of August: and besides the putrid vegetable matter, there were worms and other creatures that swarm in stagnant water. Almost as soon as they were gone, the inundation reached its limit for that year. On the 9th of September, it stood no higher than twelve cubits, twenty-one digits; and it then began to decline. The inhabitants could scarcely have had time to fill their cisterns, which they do when the waters have become red (as they call it) and not before: that is, when they bring down earth in suspension, instead of decayed vegetation. After filtering, or when the earth has subsided, the water of the Nile is the finest conceivable.

In the time of Abdallatif, the people sat watching the rise of the waters, as at this day: and terrible must have been the consternation when it appeared,

on the 9th of September, that the scanty flood was already subsiding. Many thousands were watching there, who would presently be beyond the reach of mortal hope or fear, listening for the voice of the crier who would never proclaim another inundation.—I will give, from Abdallatif, some account of the state of Egypt this year,—believing his to be the only detailed history we have of such a season in Egypt; and certain that every one must feel interest in having presented to him such a proof of the blessing that Joseph was to the nation of his time, in preserving them from such horrors as a single year of drought inevitably brings, when no preparation is made for it. I shall, however, omit the most horrible and disgusting details, as occasioning more pain than they would be worth to us in this place, though they could hardly be spared from their own.

"Under these circumstances," says Abdallatif,* "the year presented itself as a monster whose wrath must annihilate all the resources of life, and all the means of subsistence. There was no longer any hope of a further rise of the Nile; and already therefore the price of provisions had risen: the provinces were desolated by drought; the inhabitants foresaw an inevitable scarcity; and the fear of famine excited tumultuous commotions among them. The inhabitants of the villages and country estates repaired to the great provincial towns: large numbers emigrated to Syria, Magreb, Hedjaz, and Yemen, where they dispersed themselves on every hand, as did formerly the descendants of Saba. There was also an infinite number who

* Relation de l'Egypte, Livre II. ch. 2.

sought a retreat in the towns of Misr* and Cairo, where they experienced a frightful famine and mortality; for when the sun had entered Aries, the air had become corrupt, pestilence and a mortal contagion began to be felt; and the poor, pressed by a continually increasing famine, ate carrion, corpses, dogs and the dung of animals. They went further, even devouring little children. It was not an uncommon thing to surprise people with infants roasted or boiled. The commandant of the city caused all who committed this crime to be burned alive, as well as those who ate that meat. I myself saw in a basket an infant that had been roasted. It was brought to the magistrate; and with it a man and woman who were said to be its parents, and whom the magistrate sentenced to be burned alive.

"In the month of Ramadhan, a corpse was found at Misr, which had been stripped of its flesh for food, and whose legs were tied, like those of a sheep prepared for cooking. Galen desired in vain to obtain a sight of such a skeleton; and there were no means that he did not attempt for the purpose. This spectacle has been no less sought by all who have devoted themselves to the study of anatomy.

"When the poor began to eat human flesh, the horror and astonishment caused by the practice were such that these crimes were the material of every one's conversation; and the subject seemed inexhaustible: but afterwards people became so accustomed to it, and

* By Misr, Abdallatif throughout means Old Cairo, originally called Fostát. It was built by the Mohammedan conqueror of Egypt, (A. D. 638) on the site of the Egyptian Babylon. The founder made it the capital and royal residence, which it continued to be for about two centuries and a half.

such a relish began to spread for this detestable food, that some came to make it their ordinary meat, to eat it as a treat, and even to lay in a stock of it: different ways of preparing this flesh were made known: and the use of it being once introduced, the custom extended into the provinces, so that there was no part of Egypt where it might not be met with. Then it no longer caused any surprise; the horror which it had at first inspired ceased to be felt; and people spoke and heard of it as an indifferent and ordinary thing."

In this indifference lay the best hope of the cessation of the practice; for it is usually found that monstrous practices which arise out of extremity spread like a diabolical fashion; and the distracted minds which are shaken by affliction find a sort of relief in the excitement of desperate practices: and when the strangeness and novelty are over, the habitual disgust and compunction are pretty sure to return. It appears in the later parts of Abdallatif's narrative that it was so in this instance. After citing some atrocious cases, he goes on to say,—

"There were children of the poor, some in infancy and some growing up, who had no one to look after them and protect them, spread through all the quarters of the city, and in the narrowest streets, like locusts that are beaten down in the fields. Poor people, men and women, lay in wait for these wretched children, carried them off, and ate them. It was rarely that they could be detected in the very act, and when they were not on their guard. It was generally women who were so caught: a circumstance which, in my opinion, occurred only because women have less ingenuity

("finesse") than men, and cannot fly and hide themselves with so much readiness. In the space of a few days, as many as thirty women were burnt, every one of whom confessed that she had eaten several children. I saw one led before the magistrate, who had a roasted infant suspended from her neck. Two hundred stripes were inflicted upon her, to draw from her an avowal of her crime; but no reply could be wrung from her. It even appeared as if she had lost all the faculties which characterise human nature. Then she was led away by force, and she expired in the street."

Doubtless she was no longer human, but rendered brutish and idiotic by extremity. After telling how the bodies of the burnt criminals were eagerly sought, "as already cooked," and some other atrocities, our physician proceeds to relate the peculiar dangers of his medical brethren—

"Among the abandoned people, there were some who laid every sort of snare to surprise men, and to entrap them into their houses on false pretences. This was what happened to three physicians who were accustomed to visit me. . . . . The third was summoned by a man to accompany him to a sick person who lived, he said, in the Schari (the great street). As they went along, the man gave alms of small coin; and he said (out of the Kurán), *It is to-day that there will be retribution, and a reward which shall double that that is given away. Let those who act act in view of such a recompense.* This was repeated so often, that the physician began to suspect some foul play. However, the good opinion he had of this man led him on; and besides, the desire of gain actuated him; and

therefore he permitted himself to be introduced into a half-ruined mansion. Its appearance increased his alarm; and he stopped upon the staircase, while his guide went before him, and opened the door. A comrade came to meet them, and said, 'After keeping us so long, you have brought us good game, I hope.' These words struck terror into the heart of the physician. He leaped through an open window which he happily perceived, into a stable. The owner of the stable came, and asked him what was the matter: but the physician took good care not to tell him, not venturing to trust him. Then the man said to him, 'I know about your adventure: the people who live here surprise men and kill them.'"

It may be hoped that this was a *mauvaise plaisanterie*, appropriate to the time. But much that Abdallatif saw was only too real and indubitable. He says,

"If we were to relate all the anecdotes of this kind that we have heard told, or have seen with our own eyes, we should run the risk of being suspected of exaggeration, or accused of a too copious gossip. All the facts which we have related as eye-witnesses, have come under our notice without any design on our part, and without our having gone on purpose to the places where they were likely to happen: chance only made us witnesses of them; for, far from seeking them, we generally avoided the sight of them, so great was our horror of such things. Those, on the other hand, who were in the house of the magistrate, to be present at these tragic scenes, saw cases of this sort, of every kind and degree, all day and all night long." . . . . .

"This frightful calamity which I have just represented,

extended over all Egypt: there was not a single inhabited spot where the practice of eating human flesh did not become extremely common. Syene, Kous, the Faioum, Mahalleh, Alexandria, Damietta, and all other parts of Egypt, were witnesses of these scenes of horror. —A merchant, a friend of mine, a man on whom one may rely, told me, on his return from Alexandria, many facts of the nature of those which I have related, which had passed before his own eyes: and the most remarkable thing that he told me was that he had seen five children's heads in the same boiler, prepared with exquisite spices.—And now, here is enough on this part of the subject, upon which, though I have enlarged a good deal, it appears to me that I have been very brief."

He then gives an account of the murders on the river and the roads; and continues,

"As for the number of the poor who perished from hunger and exhaustion, God alone knows what it was. What we shall say of it must be regarded only as a slight sketch which may convey some idea of the fearful excess reached by this mortality. One thing of which I may speak as having seen it myself, at Misr, at Cairo, and in the neighbouring places, is that wherever one went, there was not a spot in which one's feet or one's eyes were not encountered by a corpse, or a man in the agonies of death, or even a great number in this dreadful state. Day by day, from one hundred to five hundred dead bodies were taken from Cairo, to be carried to the place where they might have funeral rites. At Misr the number of dead was incalculable. They were not buried, but merely cast out of the town. At last, there were not enough living left to carry away the dead, and

they remained in the open air, among the houses and shops, or even in the interior of dwellings. You might see a corpse falling to pieces in the very place where a cook or a baker, or other tradesman, was carrying on his business.

"As for the suburbs and villages, all the inhabitants perished, except a small number, of whom a portion quitted their abodes to go somewhere else. We must scarcely except from what I have now said the capitals of the provinces, and the largest villages. . . A traveller often passed through a large village without seeing a single living inhabitant. He saw the houses standing open, and the corpses of those who had lived there stretched out opposite one another,—some decayed, and some recently dead. Very often, there was a house full of furniture, without any one to take possession of it. What I am now saying has been communicated to me by several persons whose narratives confirmed each other. One of them said as follows:—'We arrived at a village, and there found no living thing, on the earth or in the air. Having entered the houses, the state in which the inhabitants appeared offered us an exact picture of what God says in this passage of the Kurán, *We have mowed them all down, and exterminated them.* We saw the inhabitants of each house extended dead, the husband, the wife, and the children. From thence we went to another village, where we were told that there had been till now four hundred weaving shops: and it presented to us the same scene of desolation as the first. We saw the weaver dead in his loom-pit,* and all his dead family round him. I was here reminded

* See Vol. I. p. 130.

of that other text of the Kurán, *One single cry was heard, and they all perished.* We then proceeded,' says the same person, 'to another village, where we found things just in the same state: no creature living, and the inhabitants having all become the prey of death. As we were obliged to remain there, in order to sow the lands, we had to hire people to carry away the bodies, and throw them into the Nile, at the rate of a piece of silver * for every ten bodies. At last,' added this person, 'the wolves and hyænas succeeded to the inhabitants, feeding on their carcases.'

"This is one of the most remarkable things which I myself saw," continues Abdallatif. "As I was one day, in company with several other persons, in a place which overlooked the Nile, there passed before our eyes, in the course of one hour, about ten corpses, swollen and puffed up like water-skins filled with air. We saw them by chance, not having directed our attention that way, and without commanding from our station the whole breadth of the Nile. The next day, being in a boat, we saw on the canal and on all the banks, scattered limbs like,—to use a comparison of the poet Amri-alkaïs,—'the roots of bulbous plants which have been drawn out of the ground.' I have heard of a fisherman of the port of Tennis who saw pass near him, in a single day, four hundred corpses which the waters of the river carried with them to the sea.

"According to the testimony of a great number of

* The value of these "pieces" of gold and silver has varied largely; but Mr. Lane, in his notes to the "Arabian Nights," advises us to suppose them to average,—the piece of gold, half a guinea or ten shillings, and the piece of silver about sixpence.

witnesses, the road between Egypt and Syria was like a vast field sown with human bodies: or rather, like a plain which has just been swept by the scythe of the mower. It had become as a banquet-hall for the birds and wild beasts which gorged themselves on their flesh: and the very dogs that these fugitives had taken with them, to share their exile, were the first to devour their bodies.

"The inhabitants of the Hauf" (a district to the east of the Nile, below Cairo) "when they retired into Syria to find pasturage, were the first who perished upon this road: long as it is, it was strewn with their corpses, like locusts which have been broiled;" (by the fires lighted to smoke them down:) "and to this moment, some are yet perishing there. The emigration transported some to Mosul, to Bagdad, to the countries of Korasan, of the Greek empire, of Africa, and of Yemen: and they were dispersed into all parts. It often happened that, among this crowd of emigrants, a woman slipped away from her children, and thus abandoned the unhappy little creatures, who were tormented by hunger till death put an end to their sufferings."

After a dreadful notice of the sale for bread of people of condition, Abdallatif tells us what he considers the most wonderful thing in the whole history; a thing which to us does not appear wonderful at all: that, notwithstanding such a complexity of woes as distinctly revealed the wrath of God, men continued to adore the idols of their criminal passions without any amendment, and still wallowed in the sea of their sins. He seems to be unaware that the tempting devils of human passions are roused and exasperated and hardened by

such hopeless misery as leaves them nothing more to fear from the anger of God, which, in such a season, becomes to them a mere empty name.

He next tells us of the strange appearance of a multitude of dwellings without any one to inhabit them. "I ought not," he says, "to omit noticing the depopulation of towns and villages, and the desertion of the unpeopled houses and shops:—this last trait belongs to the picture which I have undertaken to draw.... Even at Cairo, the mansions, the houses and the shops situated in the heart of the town, and in the best quarters, are for the most part, empty or deserted, so that, in the most frequented part of this capital there is a mansion composed of more than fifty apartments which have all remained empty except four, where some people are lodged to take care of the place. The inhabitants of Cairo at the present time use no other fuel for their hearths and ovens than rafters, doors, and posts.—It is however a thing well worthy of wonder that among people who had always before been unfortunate, there are some who have made a fortune this year. Some have amassed wealth by trade in corn; others by coming to rich inheritances: some others have grown wealthy without any one knowing how. Blessed be He who distributes or withholds his gifts according to His good pleasure, and who gives a share of His favours to all creatures!"

As the waters were so low previous to the inundation of this year as to leave the Nilometer completely dry, it is obvious that the flood must be again inadequate, unless a most unusual amount of water came down. And it was inadequate: yet the account of the second

year leaves the reader consoled and hopeful; so that I will give a few passages, which are also necessary to the completeness of the narrative.

Not only did the Nile cease to flow at the base of the Nilometer on the Geezeh side; it left a long and broad island, where fragments of ancient constructions were observed. I wish Abdallatif had told us what these ancient constructions appeared to be. If he had, we might have learned some secrets about the bed of the river, and about the changes of its course. The corruption of the water was very great this year. The inundation took place languidly, sometimes stopping; and once, for three days, when the people gave up all for lost, and prepared themselves for total destruction. This was on the 9th of August. But it rose again, at irregular intervals, till the 4th of September, when it reached fifteen cubits, sixteen digits. It began to sink the same day, before the ground could imbibe much of the benefit, and declined so rapidly that not nearly all the districts felt the inundation, and some of those very scantily. Abdallatif observes, "One would have said that it was only the phantom of the inundation which had visited them, like those spectres that we imagine we see in a dream, and which immediately vanish. Only the level lands profited by the inundation: and the lower provinces, as Garbiyyeh and some others, were sufficiently watered: but the villages were entirely emptied of cultivators and labourers. This text of the Kurán might be applied to them, *The next morning nothing was seen of them but their habitations.* The rich collected their scattered dependants, and brought together the few labourers who remained to

them. Labourers and cattle were so rare that a bull in good condition was sold for seventy pieces of gold; and one which was in poor plight for a little less.—In the greater part of the country districts, the waters retired too soon, and before the lands had been duly soaked, because there was no one to shut in the waters, and detain them upon the fields: and this was the reason why such lands remained untilled though they had partaken of the inundation. Many which had been watered enough remained fallow, because the proprietors could neither provide the seed nor pay the expenses of cultivation. Of the fields which were sown, many were laid waste by the vermin which devoured the seed: and of the seed which escaped this destruction, much gave out only a weak blade which presently perished.

"It is from God that consolation must be looked for: for it is He who, by His goodness and liberality, determines happy events."

Till the middle of the second year, every thing continued to grow worse. "Fewer poor perished," says Abdallatif,* "not because the cause of their destruction was altered, but only because they were reduced to a small number.—The practice of eating human flesh became less common; and at last we heard no more of it. The provisions exposed for sale in the market were more rarely stolen, because vagabonds had almost disappeared from the town. The price of provisions fell till the ardeb of wheat† was sold for three pieces of gold" (it had been five) "but this abatement of price

* Relation de l' Egypte, Livre II. ch. 3.

† A little under five bushels.

was owing to the small number of consumers, and not to the abundance of food. The city was relieved by the loss of the greater part of its population; and all that it contained was reduced in the same proportion. People became accustomed to the dearness of provisions; and by dint of enduring famine, they had, as it were, contracted the habit, like that of a natural state of things." . . . .

"I have been assured that there had previously been at Misr nine hundred machines for weaving mats; and that now only fifteen remained. We have only to apply the same proportion to the other trades which are carried on in that town; to the shop-keepers, bakers, grocers, shoemakers, tailors and other artisans. The numbers employed in each of these were reduced in the same proportion as the mat weavers; or in a greater.

"Fowls failed altogether, except a few which were brought from Syria. I have heard that an inhabitant of Egypt, seeing himself reduced to indigence, was, as it were, inspired by God to buy a hen, which he caused to be brought from Syria, and for which he paid sixty pieces of gold. He sold it again at Cairo, for eight hundred pieces of gold, to the people whose business is to rear fowls. When the eggs appeared, they were bought for a piece of silver each:—afterwards two, three, and then four eggs might be had for that money; and this was the price which was sustained. A chicken sold for a hundred pieces of silver; and the price remained for a long time as high as a piece of gold, and more.—The ovens were heated with the wood taken from empty mansions. Those who had ovens bought a

mansion for a very low price, and used the partitions and the rafters, which served them for a time to heat their ovens: when this resource was exhausted, they bought another mansion. There were some among them who, regarding only the baseness of their feelings, got into the houses in the night, and took their provision of wood, without meeting anybody who could oppose their thievery.—It often happened that a mansion continued empty, nobody remaining there but the proprietor: and for want of finding any one who would purchase it, he himself took the joists, the doors and all the furniture, which he sold: and then he abandoned the dismantled place. The same was done with houses which were hired.—As for the villages round Cairo, and in the provinces, they are now merely a fearful solitude. One may travel for several days together, and in all directions, without meeting a single living creature;—nothing but corpses.—A great mortality and pestilence happened again in the Faioum, in the province of Garbiyyeh, and at Damietta and Alexandria. It was at the time of sowing that this scourge was at the worst; and there were instances where many labourers perished successively at the same plough. It was related to me how the cultivators who sowed the seed were not those who had prepared the land: and that again, it was a different set who gathered the harvest.—I myself saw the sowing done for one of the principal lords: he sent people to do it: then, having found that they were all dead, he sent others: and the greater part of these died also. This happened over and over again, in various districts.—Persons who may be relied on informed me that at Alexandria, on one

single Friday, the Imaum had uttered the funeral prayers over seven hundred bodies: and that the same inheritance had passed to fourteen heirs in succession in the course of a month: and also that above twenty thousand inhabitants of that city had left it, had retired to the province of Barka, had established themselves there, and had rendered that region flourishing."

On the 20th of May, "there happened a violent earthquake, which filled every one with terror. Every one leaped from his bed, and uttered cries of supplication to the all-powerful God. The movement remained a long time; the shocks were like the motion of a sieve or riddle, or like that which a bird makes in flapping its wings. There were in all three violent shocks, which shook the buildings, made the doors rattle, and the rafters and roof tremble: and the dwellings which were in bad condition or in a lofty situation seemed doomed to destruction. There were more shocks towards noon of the same day; but they were felt by few persons, because they were gentle and soon over. It had been extremely cold that night, so as to compel us to cover ourselves more warmly than usual: to this temperature succeeded the next day an extreme heat, and an excessive pestilential wind which intercepted respiration, and was positively suffocating. Such an earthquake as this is rarely known in Egypt. We afterwards learned by tidings which arrived from many quarters, that the earthquake was felt at the same hour in distant countries, and in villages a long way off. I consider it certain that at the same moment a great part of the world felt the shock, from Kous to Damietta, Alexandria, the coast of Syria, and indeed the whole of Syria,

in all its length and breadth. Many inhabited places disappeared altogether, without any trace whatever being left of them, and an innumerable multitude of people perished. I know of no place in all Syria which suffered less than Jerusalem: that city suffered very little damage. The ravages caused by this event were much greater in the countries inhabited by the Franks than in those occupied by the Mussulmans." . . . .

"The following fact is one of the most remarkable of all that I witnessed. Several persons among those who diligently visited me to confer with me on medicine, having got as far as the Treatise on Anatomy (of Galen) found it difficult to understand me, as I found it difficult to make myself understood by them, because there is a great difference between a verbal description and the inspection of the objects themselves. Having learned that there was at Maks a hill on which human remains had accumulated in great quantity, we went there; and we saw a mound of considerable extent composed of the remains of human bodies: there was more of them than of the soil: and we could reckon that there were twenty thousand corpses, and, more that could be perceived by the eye. They might be distinguished into different classes, according to age." And then he proceeds to give an anatomical lecture.

"When from a height we looked down," he continues, "upon the place called the Basin, and which is a considerable hollow, we saw skulls, some white, some black, and others of a deep brown: they were in layers, and heaped up in such a quantity that they covered up the other bones: one would have said that there were

only heads without bodies: and one might suppose that one saw melons which had been gathered, and which were thrown into a pile, as we heap sheaves upon a granary floor. Some days afterwards I saw them again: the sun had dried the flesh: the skulls had become white, and I compared them to ostriches' eggs piled together.—When I contemplated on the one hand the solitude which reigned in the streets and markets of Misr, and on the other these plains and hills which vomited corpses, I represented to myself a caravan which had quitted the spot where it had encamped, and had removed to another place. Moreover, this was not the only scene which offered such a spectacle: wherever one went the same scene was presented; and often a much more frightful one." . . . .

"We will now briefly declare the state of the Nile for this year. The waters had considerably sunk in the month of January; and they continued to sink till men and horses could pass the river by fording in several places. It was in Ramadhan that the river was at its lowest point: its bed was left dry, below Mikyas, to the distance of about eight hundred cubits. Ebn-Abi'braddad ascertained the height of the water at Mikyas on the 18th of June; it was a cubit and a half; whereas the year before it stood at two cubits on that day. Last year too the river had begun to rise on this day: but now we had to wait till the 19th of July. In all this interval, the river had risen only four digits; so that there was a very bad opinion of the inundation for this year: the despair was general: people imagined that something extraordinary had happened to the sources of the Nile, and in the places through which it

passes. However, the river now began sensibly to rise; so that at the end of Epiphi (July) its height was three cubits. At this time the waters ceased to rise for two days, which caused extreme terror; because such a pause was contrary to ordinary experience. But soon after the waters came in great abundance: they rose by strides, and one might have said that mountains of water leaped upon one another. In the space of ten days, the river rose eight cubits, three of which were continuous, without any pause at all. On the 1st of September the greatest height was reached, which was one digit under sixteen cubits. After remaining for two days at this height, the waters began to decline slowly, and to flow away very gradually.

"Here is what I had to say of the circumstances of the horrible scourge whose history I have narrated. I shall therefore finish here this section and the whole book.—Praise be to God, the Sovereign Master of the universe! May God be favourable to the Prince of his messengers, to Mohammed the Prophet without learning, and to his holy and honourable descendants!"

Such was the dearth of the years A.D. 1199-1202. Such was the temporary victory gained by the pertinacious old Desert over the struggling Nile. The history suggests many thoughts;—much admiration of the sagacity and administrative ability of Joseph in saving the Egyptian nation of his day from a fate as much worse even than the above related, as their numbers were greater in the ages of the national glory than ever afterwards. Much do we wonder, too, whether Joseph was guided by any precedent; and how far by the prophecies of science. We should like

to know whether, as he grew up in his new country, he heard traditionary accounts of the horrors of drought in the valley; and whether, in such a case, he applied himself to learn the premonitory signs of the calamity. Much do we wonder whether the ancient race was ever thus nearly swept away; whether the priestly watchmen ever looked abroad from the top of their propylæ over plains sown with human bones instead of sprouting seed, and whether they called together the few survivors to sacrifice to Osiris, to bring him back from his absence or displeasure to his favourite valley. Much should we like to know from what depth of ages the greatest of intermittent springs had regularly gushed forth, to give life to an expecting nation, waiting in hope along a line of two thousand miles. The priests who expressed to Herodotus such anxious fears for the Greeks, because of their dependence upon the clouds, could hardly have known of any such drought as could parallel that of A.D. 1200, or they would have moderated their boasting, even if they had concealed the fact. Among the few historical notices which remain appended by Manetho to the names of the kings, such as "During this reign" (first king of the Second Dynasty) "a great landslip took place at Bubastis, and many perished," I am not aware that any relate to a failure of the Nile; or that there is anywhere a hint of even a tradition of such a famine as Abdallatif witnessed. It is probable that, in the days of high Egyptian civilisation, when Egypt was the granary of the world, better precautions were taken than by succeeding races of inhabitants. It seems more probable that men so able as that old Egyptian aristocracy should

have kept ample stores of food in reserve, than that the Nile should never have failed through several thousand years; or than that the memory of a great famine should have been lost in the time of Herodotus.

Here then we leave the Nile, which has been the thread of our discourse thus far. It has been before me, with all its antique interest, and all its fresh young beauty, during whatever I have written to this point; and I must hope that my readers have caught some sensations of that interest, and some glimpses of that beauty, as they have followed me. We shall see no more of it now, except as a mere line noticed from the citadel of Cairo, and as a mournful parting vision on the evening of our first encampment in the Desert.— And now, to Cairo!

CHAPTER XXI.

CAIRO.—STREETS AND BAZAARS.—MOSQUES.—CITADEL.—FÊTE OF THE BIRTH OF THE PROPHET.—ENTRANCE OF THE MAHHMIL.—THE MAGICIAN.—SOCIETY IN CAIRO.—MR. LANE.

THERE are fewer gayer things in life, for one who chooses to be gay, than a visit to Cairo. The stranger must use a few precautions against the disturbance of his gaiety; and then he may surrender himself to the most wonderful and romantic dream that can ever meet his waking senses. The most wonderful and romantic,—because there is nothing so wonderful and romantic in the whole social world as an Arabian city: and Cairo is the queen of Arabian cities. Damascus is usually ranked with Cairo; but, full of charms as Damascus is (as we may see by and by) it is charming for other reasons than it virtues as an Arabian city: on which ground it cannot for a moment stand a comparison with Cairo.—The precautions against seriousness which a stranger must take are, first, to forget that he is in Egypt; to avoid looking over westwards to the Pyramids, or too far southwards, lest an array of old Egyptian ghosts should marshal themselves on the horizon, and cast a shadow of solemnity over his thoughts. He must also shake off any considerate

humanity which may hang about him, and avoid inquiring what lies beneath what he sees, or thinking of any people but those whom he meets in the bazaars. A butterfly may enjoy a glorious day in hovering about an array of flower-baskets, not caring whether the flowers are growing or stuck into wet sand: and the stranger in Cairo may have a short season of transport, if he will only take up with the shows of things, and forget the roots.

The mere spectacle of the streets I relished more and more to the last. As for the rest, I could not keep my heart and mind in abeyance for many days: and before I left, I felt that there is hardly a spot in what I have seen of the countries of the world where I would not rather live than in Cairo. The more I liked the Arabs, and the more I admired their gem of a city, the more impossible I felt it would be to live there, for any other reason than a strong call of duty.—The mere spectacle of the streets became, however, as I said, more bewitching every day.

After an early cup of coffee, we usually mounted our donkeys for a ride of two hours before the table-d'hôte breakfast. I like donkey-riding in Cairo. I never tried it out of Egypt, except for a few miles in Palestine: but I do not suppose it is the same thing anywhere else. The creatures are full of activity; and their amble is a pleasant pace in the streets. Side-saddles, more or less tattered, may be hired with Cairo donkeys now. Mrs. Y. took her saddle from England: and I was fortunate enough to buy one, in good repair, on my arrival at Cairo, which would serve for either horse or donkey. The little rogues of donkey-boys

were always ready and eager, close by the hotel,—hustling each other to get the preference,—one displaying his English with "God save the queen ros bif;" another smiling amiably in one's face; and others kicking and cuffing, as people who had a prior right, and must relieve us of encroachers.—Then off we went briskly through the Ezbekeeyeh, under the acacias, past the water-carriers, with their full skins on their left shoulder, and the left hand holding the orifice of the neck, from which they could squirt water into the road, or quietly fill a jar at pleasure;—past the silent smoking party, with their long chibouques or serpentine nargeelehs;—past the barber, shaving the head of a man kneeling and resting his crown on the barber's lap;—past the veiled woman with her tray of bread,—thin, round cakes;—past the red and white striped mosque, where we looked up to the gallery of the minaret, in hope of the muezzin coming out to call the men to prayer;—past a handsome house or two, with its rich lattices, its elaborate gateway, and its shade of trees in front, or of shrubs within the court, of which we might obtain a tempting glimpse;—past Shepherd's hotel, where English gentlemen might be seen going in and out, or chatting before the door;—past a row of artisan dwellings, where the joiner, the weaver, and the maker of slippers were at work, with their oriental tools, and in their graceful Oriental postures;—and then into the bazaars. But before I had reached the bazaars, I was generally in a state of vexation with myself for my carelessness about surrounding objects. I hardly know what it is in these Eastern countries which disposes one to reverie: but I verily thought, the whole journey

through, and especially at Cairo, that I was losing my observing faculties,—so often had I to rouse myself, or to be roused by others, to heed what was before my eyes. I did not find it so on our route to Egypt, nor in crossing France on our return: so, my own experience would lead me to suppose that there is something in the aspect of Oriental life and scenery which meets and stimulates some of one's earliest and deepest associations, and engages some of one's higher mental faculties too much to leave the lower free. The conflict was not agreeable, however;—the longing to have for one's own for ever every exquisite feature of the scene; and presently, the discovery that one had passed through half a dozen alleys without seeing anything at all;—and all for pondering something which might be as well thought over at home! By dint of incessant self-flapping and endless rides, however, I arrived at last at knowing and remembering almost every peculiar object in Cairo;—of such, I mean, as offer themselves to the eye in the streets.—I really do not know how I can convey my own impression of what I saw so well as in the words of my memoranda put down at the time. "Cairo streets are wholly indescribable; their narrowness, antiquity, sharp lights, and arcades of gloom, carved lattices, mat awnings, mixture of hubbub and fatalist quietude in the people, to whom loss of sight appears a matter of course; the modes of buying and selling;—all are in my mind, but cannot be set down." Again. "Went with my party to shop: a most amusing affair. I bought a Tuscan straw hat for 4*s.* 6*d.* while a common and not large saucepan, copper tinned, was priced 12*s.* It was awkward waiting while

Mr. E. bought brown shoes,—the way was so narrow, and our donkeys were five, and horses and laden camels were continually passing, thrusting us among the very merchandise: and then there was the smart and repeated crack of the courbash which gives warning that a carriage is coming, and that we must plunge into the nearest alley: and then there was a cart or two; and all the while there was some staring, though not much, and clouds of flies from a fruiterer's shop." The tranquil slowness with which the tradespeople (who all looked, to my eyes, like kings and princes in fairy tales) served any one of us gave all the rest many such opportunities of observation. One of the drollest incidents of this kind befel when the gentlemen were in search of some eastern garments for their desert ride. We ladies, with the aid of our dragoman, made our purchases, and returned to the tailor's,—stood, sat, inquired into the meaning of everything within sight, and wondered at the long delay. It ended in the amusement of finding that the gentlemen had obtained nothing but a lesson, and some practice in trying on eastern garments. After a world of effort, and of tying and hooking, and inquiring of prices, it came out that the clothes were second-hand: and they were pulled off much more quickly than they were put on.

Carriages are quite alarming in Cairo, which was not built for the passage of anything so large. They are very peremptory, having no idea of stopping for any body. Notice of their approach is given by the crack of the courbash of the outrider who precedes them; and any one who does not get out of the way on that signal must take the consequences. On comes the

vehicle, jolting and rocking, and filling the narrow way; and young and old, blind and seeing, must squeeze themselves up against the bazaar front; and a loaded camel must meet the shock as it may. It is worse, however, to ride in one than to meet it. In our drive to the hareem which we visited, we were kept in a continual agony, so many were the people we drove against. The keeping of carriages was much on the increase before there was any provision for them. A friend of mine found one in his street when he went to live there, four years and a half before my visit; and now there are twenty-four or twenty-five, making the passage of the street very hazardous. Since I left Cairo, a wide street has been begun, extending from the Ezbekeeyeh to the Citadel: a great convenience to the Pasha and the Franks, but a ruinous innovation upon the oriental appearance of the city. The Frank residents, however, now give up the orientalism of Cairo; and I was perpetually told by them that I was looking at a half-European city: but my own impression is that it is as like as possible to the pictures in the Arabian Nights: so that, of all the cities that I have seen, Cairo is the one which may be the most easily imagined at a distance, in a superficial way,—provided the notions of a mosque, a bazaar and an eastern house are once obtained from pictures. The one unimaginable circumstance is the atmosphere. No conception of the light, shade, and colour can be conveyed; and they are an hourly surprise to the stranger in Cairo, to the last.

The Mosques are extremely interesting: partly from their architectural beauty; more so from their purposes,

and the pleasure of seeing those purposes fulfilled. Nothing charmed me so much about them as the spectacle of the houseless poor, who find a refuge there. In the noble mosque of Sultaun Hasan, when we had mounted a long flight of steps from the street, and more stairs which led to the barrier where we must put on slippers, we entered a vast court, sacred to all who have hearts, whether they be heathens, Mohammedans, or Christians, for the solace and peace which are to be found there. The greater part of this court was open to the sky; its floor was of inlaid marble; and in the centre was the tank where the worshippers perform their ablutions before praying. The steps to the roofed platform at the upper end were matted; and on these steps some men were at prayer. On the platform sat a man making a garment,—spreading out his cloth upon the mat, and running the seams, as much at his ease as if he had been in a home of his own. This was a homeless man: and here he was welcome. Several poor people were sitting talking cheerfully: and under this roof, and on this mat, they were welcome to sleep, if they had no other place of rest. Some children were at play quietly on the marble pavement. We are accustomed to say that there is no respect of persons, and that all men are equal, within the walls of our churches: but I never felt this so strongly in any Christian place of worship as in this Mohammedan one, with its air of freedom, peace, and welcome to all the faithful. I felt myself an intruder there, in a retreat which should be kept sacred for those who go to it, not as a church, but as a religious home.—Still, good as it seems for the people to be there, and happy as appears the provision

for them, they are sighing, as people everywhere are always sighing, for the return of their golden age. This reverting propensity seems common to all men; and every race seems to have had its golden age. Our dragoman pointed to a medallion in the interior, three feet in diameter, and told us that in Sultaun Hasan's time, "bread of the size of that was to be had for a para."—We reached this interior from the platform, through a magnificent portal of cast metal of beautiful pattern. In the centre of the vast chamber was the Sultaun's tomb, railed round. On the tomb lay a tattered, but very fine old copy of the Kurán; and some Syrian lamps were beside it. The decorations of the walls and corners must once have been magnificent, some elaborate wood carving remaining which shows traces of gilding and colour. The best account of a mosque that I know is that of Mr. Milnes in his "Palm Leaves;" a book, the value and beauty of which can be appreciated only during or after a visit to the East. As his poem of "the Mosque" may not have met the eye, or fixed the attention, of all my readers, I venture to give part of it here. Any one who is acquainted with it will not be sorry to fall in with it again:—

"A simple unpartitioned room,—
Surmounted by an ample dome,
Or, in some lands that favoured lie,
With centre open to the sky,
But roofed with arched cloisters round,
That mark the consecrated bound,
And shade the niche to Mekkeh turned,
By which two massive lights are burned;
With pulpit whence the sacred word
Expounded on great days is heard;
With fountains fresh, where, ere they pray,
Men wash the soil of earth away;

With shining minaret, thin and high,
From whose fine trellieed balcony,
Announcement of the hours of prayer
Is uttered to the silent air;
Such is the Mosque—the holy place,
Where faithful men of every race,
Meet at their ease and face to face.

"Not that the power of God is here
More manifest, or more to fear;
Not that the glory of his face
Is circumscribed by any space;
But that, as men are wont to meet
In court or chamber, mart or street,
For purposes of gain or pleasure,
For friendliness or social leisure,—
So for the greatest of all ends
To which intelligence extends,
The worship of the Lord, whose will
Created and sustains us still,
And honour of the Prophet's name,
By whom the saving message came,
Believers meet together here,
And hold these precincts very dear.

"The floor is spread with matting neat,
Unstained by touch of shodden feet,—
A decent and delightful seat!
Where after due devotions paid,
And legal ordinance obeyed,
Men may in happy parlance join,
And gay with serious thought combine;
May ask the news from lands away,
May fix the business of to-day;
Or, with "God willing," at the close,
To-morrow's hopes and deeds dispose.

"Children are running in and out,
With silver-sounding laugh and shout,
No more disturbed in their sweet play,
No more disturbing those that pray,
Than the poor birds that fluttering fly
Among the rafters there on high,
Or seek at times, with grateful hop,
The corn fresh-sprinkled on the top.

"So, lest the stranger's scornful eye
Should hurt this sacred family,—
Lest inconsiderate words should wound
Devout adorers with their sound,—
Lest careless feet should stain the floor
With dirt and dust from out the door,—
'Tis well that custom should protect
The place with prudence circumspect,
And let no unbeliever pass
The threshold of the faithful mass;
That as each Muslim his Hareem
Guards even from a jealous dream,
So should no alien feeling scathe
This common home of public faith,
So should its very name dispel
The presence of the infidel."

The Pasha's new mosque at the citadel is a building magnificent for space, and in its position: and I hope he will see it finished before the time comes for him to be laid in it. It is a great enterprise; and this mosque will henceforth be a striking feature to the stranger in the aspect of Cairo. But I must think the use of alabaster for the interior of the court a great mistake. However beautiful this veined alabaster is in small portions, its effect is not good in the mass. I never looked round that court without being reminded of dirty soap-suds. The streaky and mottled character of the alabaster utterly destroys the impression of grandeur which the architecture would otherwise give. And, what is worse, it is a crumbling material. Little kernels are falling out, and corners are broken off, and the sharpness of edges is gone already, before the work is half done. One might almost as well build a sculptured and pillared hall of chalk. The interior of this mosque is of vast dimensions, and must be truly imposing when finished.

It is from this eminence,—from the terrace of the citadel—that that view is obtained which is by some declared to be unsurpassed by any in the known world. On the whole, I prefer the view of Damascus from the Salaheeyeh to that of Cairo from the terrace of the citadel: but elsewhere I certainly should not know how to find a parallel for it.

I would entreat any stranger to see this view first in the evening,—before sunset. I saw it three times or more. In the morning there was much haze in the distance, and a sameness of colour which hurt the eye. At noon there was no colour at all: all colour being discharged in the middle of the day in Egypt, except in shady places. In the evening the beauty is beyond description. The vastness of the city, as it lies stretched below, surprises every one. It looks a perfect wilderness of flat roofs, cupolas, minarets, and palm tops, with an open space here and there, presenting the complete front of a mosque, and gay groups of people, and moving camels,—a relief to the eye, though so diminished by distance. The aqueduct is a most striking feature, running off for miles. The City of Tombs was beautiful and wonderful,—its fawn coloured domes rising against the somewhat darker sand of the desert. The river gleamed and wound away from the dim south into the blue distance of the north, the green strip of cultivation on its banks delighting the eye amidst the yellow sands. Over to the west, the Pyramids looked their full height, and their full distance, which is not the case from below. The platform of the Great Pyramid is here seen to be a considerable hill of itself; and the fields and

causeways which intervene between it and the river lie as in a map, and indicate the true distance and elevation of these mighty monuments. The Lybian hills, dreary as possible, close in the view behind them, as the Mokuttam range does above and behind the citadel.—This view is the great sight of Cairo, and that which the stranger contrives to bring into his plan for almost every day.

Of course we saw the court where the Memlooks were slaughtered, and the wall whence Emin Bey took his leap, and the narrow street below, up which he fled. The wall must have been a good deal raised, even allowing for the rubbish heap which that day lay below; for its height above the street is now not less than eighty feet. No lapse of time or consideration of circumstances can soften one's feelings about that act of treacherous barbarity, or lessen one's compassion for the man who would purchase life and empire (supposing them to have been really in danger) at such a price. If any of my readers should be unaware of this deed of Mohammed Alee's, it may be soon learned. —He wanted to go into Arabia, to drive out the Wahabees who molested the pilgrims: but he was afraid to leave Egypt while the proud Memlooks remained, to accomplish some objects of theirs, adverse to him, in his absence. He invited the whole body of their leaders to the citadel, to witness a fête, treated them with the usual hospitalities, and dismissed them courteously. As the last went out, the doors were securely fastened; and when the guests, who had mounted their horses in the court, reached the gates, they found them closed, and nobody to answer their

call to have them opened. As they turned, to gallop back to the Pasha, a murderous fire was directed upon them from above. They could find no one; and they were surrounded by high walls. Men and horses lay heaped together in the agonies of death. Some fled round and round the court till the inevitable ball reached them: and more than one, in rage and agony at such a death being appointed to armed men in their martial strength, drove their heads against the stone walls, or shot out their own brains. One only escaped; —Emin Bey, who made his horse leap the parapet, alighted on a heap of rubbish in the street below, pushed his frantic horse to a gallop through the narrow streets, and took refuge with some Arabs, whose tents were about two miles from the city, and who concealed him till he could reach the sea, and quit the country. The Pasha employed his barbarous Greek soldiers to do this deed, and paid them by a license to plunder the houses of the Memlooks. The slaughter and ravage which ensued were so horrible that the Pasha himself had to parade the city on the second day, to put a stop to the pillage. The massacre took place on the 1st of March, 1811; and the number of Memlooks slain in the citadel is reported to be from 360 to 440. How many more of inferior rank were slain in the city, no one seems to know, the reports varying from 80 to 1200. Of course, the Memlook power was destroyed. The Pasha obtained his object with regard to that. But the memory of this deed interferes fatally with his other great object of being considered to have emancipated himself from the barbarism of the eastern world.

We saw his palace, in which there is nothing remarkable. His bath was yet warm; and his fine, uncomfortable, embroidered towel still wet. His gardener offered flowers to Mrs. Y. and me, in bouquets of a pyramidal form,—as carefully built up, in their way, as the pyramids themselves.

The fête of the Birth of the Prophet happened when we were at Cairo; and we went at noon to see what it was like. The best part of it was the appearance of the city that day, when the people were all dressed in their best; the men with clean turbans and bright purple tunics, and the ladies with gay silks under their floating balloon mantles of black silk. On the spot of the fête, the scene was not unlike that of a fair at home, except of course in regard to the dresses, and that the riders in the swings sat in the oriental fashion. There was a booth with dancing girls; a horrid sight, which we were glad to turn away from. So hideous a creature as the one who was dancing I never saw: the music was only the ordinary drum, or tom-tom, as it would be called further south in Africa: and the dancing is an observance which we could never understand,—there being neither grace, nor mirth, nor any other merit in it that we could perceive. Whenever we saw it, in this booth, in the hareems, or on our deck, it appeared to us the same disagreeable and foolish wriggle, without activity of limb, or grace of attitude. The rest of the spectacle at this fête was merely swinging, and feeding at the stalls. The Arabs are fond of sucking the sugar-cane, which indeed I think very pleasant myself. We never rode through Cairo without meeting people thus enjoying themselves;

and during our voyage, the avidity of the crew, when they could contrive to land in a cane patch, was remarkable. Watchmen would come rushing down, to defend the canes; and we were made seriously uneasy sometimes by seeing what bundles our men carried away under their arms. If we remonstrated, we were told that they had paid for them. Perhaps they might; but I could never, by the sharpest watching, see the payment made: and I did see, now and then, that the country people were very angry.

Of course, the chief interest in these fêtes which we saw, and wherever many people were gathered together, was in observing their faces. The Arab face is very beautiful; and the expression has so much to do with it that the worst set of features is not ugly, as it would be elsewhere. One face, of which I saw a good deal, would appear hideous if drawn in profile, or presented in a cast,—with its outrageously thick lips, immense jaw and ugly nose: but I think of that face as almost beautiful. The brown complexion (which, in this case, precisely matched the owner's cinnamon-coloured vest) is a kind of veil to English eyes, softening down harshness of features: and then, there are the brilliant teeth, quite universally magnificent, and only injured by the strange practice I have mentioned—of drawing the teeth needful for biting cartridges:—and then, there are the beautiful eyes, soft, clear and intelligent; and the exquisite grace of carriage and gesture, set off to the utmost by the oriental dress. Among these advantages, the ugliness of particular features is almost lost: and the prevailing impression of the observer is that he sees beauty wherever he turns. The pathetic

expression of the Arab face, its softness and melancholy; the flowing dress, the slow movement, (in the absence of causes of disturbance,) give the impression of great dignity, it is true, but also of languor and delicacy: but the muscular strength of these pathetic Arabs is very great. It is not only that they can support fatigue and hunger in their journeys, and wrestle vigorously with an opponent, in one of the quarrels they are so fond of falling into:—they lift prodigious weights, and carry vast burdens in cool blood. We understood our dragoman's health not to be very good; and I certainly doubted his fitness for his office at first, when it was clear that his lungs were weak; but the daily proofs he gave of muscular strength would have surprised many a stout English servant.

As for accurate knowledge of the health and length of life of the Egyptians, there is none to be had. The distrust existing between the government and the people is a bar to the obtaining of any reliable information about any of their affairs; and the observations of a passing stranger can be worth little. My impression was that of travellers generally. I was surprised to see how dirty and unhealthy-looking children can grow into strong and well-formed men and women: and I was struck by the small proportion of sick that came under my notice throughout the country. On the whole, a stranger would be disposed to conclude that the poorer classes, whom the curse of polygamy scarcely reaches, must be in favourable circumstances in regard to health,—judging from the prevalence of muscular strength, of fine teeth, and of beauty of form and face. Among the richer classes, where a viler polygamy

prevails than in almost any country of the world, it is far otherwise.

We were so fortunate as to witness a much more imposing festival than that of the birth of the Prophet:—the return of the Mahhmil.

On the morning of Sunday, the 14th of January, the news flew through the city of the return of the Pilgrims from Mekkeh. This pilgrimage is always subject to so many hardships and dangers, so many lives and fortunes are concerned in it, and there is such an absence of news from the departure of the caravan till its return, that its re-appearance is always an occasion of great excitement: and this year the excitement was unusually strong, from the cholera having committed great ravages among the pilgrims. As soon as this fact was made known in the city by the first comers, early that Sunday morning, crowds poured out to meet the caravan;—crowds of people, each one of whom was in suspense about the life of some relation or friend. We were told by friends who happened to witness the meeting, that it was a very touching sight; and that the joy of some, and the dreadful wailing of others, were indeed quite overpowering. The report in the city throughout the day was that eight thousand out of thirty thousand had perished: but this was a great exaggeration, as we soon found. The caravan consisted of seventy thousand in the whole,—Cairo, that is, Egypt, sending out about thirty thousand of these. One-tenth of the whole, seven thousand, were carried off by cholera.

We rode, in the afternoon, to the encampment outside the walls. There was not much to see, the

pilgrims having naturally entered the city and gone home, instead of waiting to join the procession of the next morning. Out of the two thousand camels of the morning, we saw only about one hundred and fifty. The tents were to the last degree shabby and sordid-looking; and so were the machines,—the canopied-boxes—in which some of the women and children were carried on the backs of camels: but one likes to see the shabbiness which tells of the reality of such a pilgrimage. A governor of the expedition is appointed yearly: and here the governor with his attendants was sitting in his tawdry and faded green tent, smoking, and permitting the gaze of all who came. We saw how the beasts of the caravan are tethered at night, and observed a few groups of the pilgrims, eating or lounging, or tending their children; and that was all.

Accounts differed as to the time when the procession was to enter, the next morning. Alee had hired for us a shop-front in the Turkish bazaar; and there we were seated, by seven o'clock, I think, on a carpet, at the level of the peoples' shoulders;—in as good a place as could be had. While there, no insult whatever was offered us; and our presence seemed to excite very little notice, except among those who wanted baksheesh. Afterwards, when we were riding after the Mahhmil to the citadel, and when the press of the crowd made the act a safe one, somebody spat a mouthful of chewed sugar-cane at me; and I received a smart slap in the face from a millet-stalk: and one or two other persons in the Frank group met with a similar insult. But the good behaviour on the whole

was wonderful, in comparison with former times. Baké Bey, the ruler of the affairs of the festival, had declared that any rudeness to Europeans should be severely punished.

We had not to wait long for the procession; and the interval was amusing enough. A pair of wrestlers came to show their prowess before us. Never had I imagined such wrestling. Their bodies, bare to the waist, were slippery with grease; and they took the greatest imaginable care not to hold one another too hard. They seemed to suppose each other made of pie-crust. They looked at each other with a sort of good-humoured threatening; shook their heads manfully; slipped their hands round one another's greasy arms; leaned their heads gently against one another's shoulders; strove to pant and be out of breath; and then turned to us for baksheesh. We had seen many a better match on the river-bank, when two of our crew had quarrelled about a bit of bread.

There were no pilgrims in the procession. They were gone home, or were entering the city more quickly and quietly by other gates. First, came music, loud and rude: and next, a company of foot-soldiers. Then, the governor of the caravan,—the Emir el Hadj, with his officers. Then the Mahhmil:—which is the sort of vehicle or tent in which a royal lady would ride on her camel, if she went on the pilgrimage. The origin of the custom of sending the Mahhmil is, as Mr. Lane tells us,* supposed to be that a royal lady did make the pilgrimage, in the thirteenth century, in such a vehicle; that her empty tent was dispatched with the

* Modern Egyptians, II. 182.

caravan for several years afterwards, as an emblem of royalty; and that Princes of other countries sent a similar emblem. Why it is now esteemed so sacred as it is, no one seems able to explain. The Mahhmil was, on this occasion, of square form, with a pyramidal top, surmounted by a gilt ball and crescent. Its covering was of dark purple brocade, richly embroidered, in gold, with various symbolical devices. It was carried by a tall, handsome, light-coloured camel, hung over with fringes and tassels, like the Mahhmil itself, and led by a proud driver, who was soon to yield up the rein to no less a personage than Abbas Pasha. This was the final task of the camel, which was never to work more.—Next came the only offensive object in the whole show,—the Sheikh of the camel. This was the old fanatic or knave who has attended the caravan for a quarter of a century, rolling his head all the way to Mekkeh and back, every year. I do not know whether he can now hold up his head: but if his brain is really disordered, I am sure it is no wonder. He was naked, except a little pair of old cotton trowsers; his hair grew bushy and wild; and, as he rolled about on his camel, he looked, of course, perfectly crazy. We were assured, however, that he is a rich and luxurious man, having one of the handsomest hareems in Cairo, and another, no-less enviable, at Mekkeh. This fellow is allowed by government two camels, and whatever he wants for the journey. He is keeper of the cats; about which cats we could learn nothing, except that an old woman used to carry a camel load of cats in pilgrimage; and we suppose the Sheikh of the camel has taken them in charge.

The next part of the procession interested me the most. The guard rode two and two. These soldiers were in shabby, sometimes tattered, clothing; which was their badge of honour. Their clothing testified to their activity and their hardships, during the three months that they had acted as escort to the expedition: and they were now going to the citadel, to receive new dresses. Several camels, adorned with little flags, small tufts of feathers, and housings embroidered with cowries, were among and behind these soldiers: and that was all.

Our asses were held in readiness for us to mount, and follow the procession to the citadel, which we did without difficulty, though the streets were crowded. We fell in with almost all the Frank travellers in Cairo, making a pretty large and very conspicuous group, and a curious rear-guard of the procession of the Mahhmil. It was here, when for an instant riding in single file, that I met with the insult I mentioned: and I really did not wonder at it; and could not resent it, putting myself in the place, for the moment, of a devout Mohammedan.

The finest part of the sight was now to come. In the midst of the vast area before the citadel, soldiers were drawn out in three sides of a square; music brayed; cannon were fired; and cavalry dashed about in the way which I had often read of, but had not, up to this moment, seen. Such horsemanship is really a great sight, as I afterwards occasionally felt in the Desert. It is no more like the best riding we see in England than the swiftest run of a greyhound is like the trot of a cat, or the flight of a swallow is like that

of a chicken. We have not room for Arabian riding in England, if we had all the other requisites. It is not every horseman who can get access to Salisbury plain, or a race-course, or a long stretch of hard and smooth sea-shore.—Amidst the noise of the cannon, the music, and the multitude, Abbas Pasha, the grandson of Mohammed Alee, took the rein of the camel of the Mahhmil, and led it hither and thither and away. It was a spirited and beautiful sight.

I have been so often asked since my return whether I saw the Magician at Cairo, that I suppose I had better say what I know about him, and what I saw him do.—Some gentlemen in our hotel (Hotel d'Orient) told us that they had engaged the Magician for the evening of this Monday, the 22d. It was permitted to our party, and to some other English in the hotel, to be present. The Magician did not come: and on being questioned the next morning, he excused himself on various grounds; but it plainly appeared at last that he was afraid to come;—afraid of being browbeaten and laughed at by the Franks, and of having his fee taken from him (he said) by the people in the inn-yard. He was promised civil treatment and earnest attention while with us, and special protection home after the *séance*. Moreover, an admirable interpreter was offered to us. Little reliance is to be placed on the interpretation of any dragoman in this case: and Mr. Lane's nephew, Stanley Poole, kindly offered to come and be tongue to both parties. Those who have the pleasure of knowing Mr. Lane's nephews know that wherever they are, there is security for good sense, cheerful kindness, and gentlemanly manners: and on this

occasion, my young friend Stanley appeared to satisfy the Magician as much as he pleased every body else.

All the experiments were failures;—total and ludicrous failures: yet I am glad we saw the Magician; because I have brought away a very clear and strong impression of the whole case: an impression which is shared by some who are qualified like myself to form a judgment upon it.

The Magician, who is rather a good-looking old gentleman, followed his usual and well-known method of preparing and burning charms and incense, and then summoned the Arab boy who had been brought by himself, or some one not of the English party. When the boy crouched down, close to the Magician and his pan of charcoal, the incense burning was so powerful that three of the English party were presently sound asleep; and some others were drowsy. I, having no sense of smell, and being therefore unaffected by the perfumes, was wide awake, and closely on the watch. As soon as the old man had poured the ink into the boy's hand, and had his own left hand at liberty, he rested the tips of the fingers firmly on the crown of the boy's head, and kept them there. When asked why he did so, he replied that it was to hold the boy's head steady, that he might look fixedly into the ink; but it was observable that he did not touch the head of the others afterwards brought in—nor mine, when I took their place. I saw in the boy that peculiar quivering of the eyelids which is one sign of the presence of mesmeric action.

One specimen of the failures will suffice. I was sitting opposite the boy when he was told to call and

look for Harriet Martineau. By degrees he spoke the name;—saw nothing at first; but presently said the person was visible. "What do you see?"—"I see a young lady, dressed in black silk, walking in a garden, leading a little child by the hand."—After a few more failures like this, he was sent away, and kept carefully apart till one of the gentlemen had brought in a boy picked up in the street. He, and another after him, succeeded no better.—By this time I had arrived at the conclusion which I now hold;—that it is an affair of mesmerism, and that the Magician himself probably does not know it. If the truth were understood, I have no doubt it would appear that, in the first instance, a capital *clairvoyant* did see and tell the things declared, under the influence of the old man's mesmeric power, and when there was accidentally a *rapport* established between the questioner and the boy. I am disposed to think that there was originally no imposture about the matter at all: that the Magician did not then understand the causes of his success, and does not now understand the causes of his failures. If he continues to take fees without hope of success, of course he is now an impostor: but if he believes that his success or failure depends on the pleasure of spirits whom he propitiates, he may be always hoping for success, and may think it wrong to refuse the chance. It is true, he is meantime taking money for what he does not perform, and is therefore fairly open to any extent of suspicion: but I do not see reason to suppose that it is a case of imposture from end to end. I wish a trial could be made by some one who understands what is known of Mesmerism. If a boy, proved to be

susceptible in the inferior degrees, could be subjected to the Magician's charms, and questioned, after being put *en rapport* with the questioner and the interpreter, I think it probable that he would succeed as well as the original oracle: or, if the first should not prove *clairvoyant*, a second, third, or fourth might. In my opinion, the experiment would be well worth trying where subjects could be had of a race probably so susceptible of the Mesmeric influence as the Arabs.

Seeing what I saw, and being myself a very good mesmeric subject, I asked one of my friends to tell the old man that I had seen curious things done in England, and knew the truth of such *clairvoyance* as he professed to show; and that I would take the boy's place. I knew he would refuse, and plead some good reasons against it: but I desired my friend to take no refusal. The old man presently said I might do as I liked; but he did not think it would succeed.—More charms and incense were burned, my hand was duly scored with ink, and the usual pool poured into the palm; and I faithfully gazed into it. In two minutes the sensation came, though there was no hand upon my head. The Magician is a powerful, and, no doubt, unconscious mesmeriser. Presently I began to see such odd things in the pool of ink,—it grew so large before my aching eyes, and showed such strange moving shadows and clear symmetrical figures and intersecting lines, that I felt uncertain how long I could command my thoughts and words; and, considering the number of strangers present, I thought it more prudent to shake off the influence while I could, than to pursue the experiment. The perfumes might have some effect, though I was

insensible to them; and so might the dead silence, and my steadfast gazing into the ink. But that there was also a strong mesmeric influence present, I am certain.

I hope it will not be long before some satisfactory course of mesmeric experiment, like that so triumphantly pursued by Dr. Esdaile in India, is instituted in Egypt, or at Jerusalem, with Arabs for subjects.

As far as our knowledge goes (which is but a little way, at present) it appears that the dark-skinned races, —as the Hindoos and the negroes,—are eminently susceptible; and it is a loss to science not to ascertain what they can do.—Nothing mortified me so much, in the course of my journey, as the being obliged to leave unused such an apparent opportunity of inquiry as I had while travelling among the Arabs: but in truth, I had no opportunity. We were always moving from place to place; there was no one who could help me;—and I needed all my own strength to meet the fatigues of travelling. I mesmerised a sick friend at Cairo, and found the exhaustion so great,—so unlike anything I ever experienced from mesmerising at home,—that I was warned to be prudent, for my party's sake even more than my own. But I wish some few of the many I met abroad who know the truth of mesmerism would unite to institute a course of experiments on Arab subjects. All the naval surgeons I met in the Mediterranean know the truth of Mesmerism as well as I do, and admit its importance: so do some eminent naval officers there; and the Physician of the French Embassy in Egypt; and the gentlemen from India who have witnessed what Dr. Esdaile and the Bengal

Government have done; and Mr. Lane, and the Bishop of Jerusalem; and, in short, every man of education, who has really attended to the subject. Among them, there are some who think most of the curative powers of Mesmerism; but there are others who see how infinitely more important and interesting are those of its facts which belong to Mental philosophy, and who feel what an illustrious foreigner expressed to me, in London, not long ago: "it is a shame for your country that it should be behind every other civilised nation, in regard to this portion of science. It is strange that men should be slow to investigate a powerful curative means. But when the same agent shows that Man has a new faculty of the mind,—a faculty hitherto not numbered among his powers,—what can one say to indifference to such a discovery as that,—the greatest that Man has ever made, or can ever make! It is a shame for your country!" If others of our countrymen abroad will follow Dr. Esdaile's example in using their opportunities, they may yet redeem us from the disgrace we lie under with the educated classes of every country in Europe, for our want of a true philosophical spirit of inquiry and teachableness in regard to the facts of Mesmerism. However, we are wiser than we were a few years ago: and it is now a rare thing, I believe, to meet an educated person who does not regard the subject with seriousness and candour, and, after inquiry, with undoubting belief to a greater or less extent.

Cairo is indeed a pleasant place to spend a few weeks in, at the season of the year when we were there. Besides the delightful temperature, and its Arabian wonders and beauties, there is some agreeable society.

The Hotel d'Orient and Shepherd's Hotel were quite full during our stay: and I believe there is seldom a time when many English do not meet at Cairo,—some coming from home on their way to India, or for travelling objects, and others arriving from India for health or holiday. Then, there are the European Legations, with their hospitalities and agreeable society. And the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Lieder of the Prussian Mission is known to every body who has needed a welcome, or aid, or guidance in that strange city, so far from home. There is another privilege, accessible to few, but of inestimable value to the traveller in Egypt, which I was permitted to enjoy;—intercourse with Mr. Lane and his family. There is no need for me, or any one, at this time of day, to say anything of Mr. Lane personally. His opinions and character have long taken their rank;—a rank so high that it is a sort of impertinence for a passing traveller to present them. But I have been so often asked since my return home what it is exactly that Mr. Lane is about at Cairo, and it concerns the best classes of Englishmen so much to know exactly what Mr. Lane *is* about at Cairo, that I certainly ought to tell, as far as I am capable, how I found him occupied.

Every body knows Mr. Lane's reputation for Arabic scholarship; but too few know the generosity with which he has devoted himself to the interests of scholarship, to the injury of his private fortunes, and the sacrifice, for some years, of home and country. We are, happily, never without examples of generosity before our eyes;—the generosity of men of honour, the generosity of the poor, and of the philanthropic:

and men of science and literature have never been behind others in sacrificing their means, whether of money, time, health, or domestic ease, to the cause of knowledge and human improvement. Among these public benefactors is Mr. Lane; and I wish the nature and extent of his labours and sacrifices were better known than they are. One gentleman has shown his sense of the public obligations to Mr. Lane;—has shown that sense in the best possible way;—by aiding Mr. Lane's object. The present Duke of Northumberland, when Lord Prudhoe, saw at once that Mr. Lane's object was one of vast importance, and that no time must be lost in accomplishing it; and he acted accordingly. It is owing to him that the work has advanced so far as that we may hope for its completion in, I believe, two years.

It is well known to oriental scholars that no good Arabic Lexicon exists: and perhaps none but men of learning can fully understand how important it is to the world that it should have a good Arabic Lexicon: but it is evident enough to ordinary people that it is of consequence to our knowledge of history and ancient literature to have as good a key as can be found to the treasures of Arabic literature. There are, in the Mosques of Cairo, materials essential to the formation of a perfect Lexicon which can be had nowhere else: these MSS. are crumbling to pieces so fast that, if not used now, they will be lost for ever; and Mr. Lane is the only competent man who has access to these materials. He saw the importance of the object, felt the pressure of the time, knew that he was the man for the work, and therefore devoted himself to it, in a generous

negligence of his personal interests. He gave up a good literary income in London, the comforts of an English home, and the society of family and friends, and went to live at Cairo, working, to the injury of his health, at an unremunerative labour which he well knew the world would be slow to appreciate. And there he toils, day by day, with his sheikh, poring over the old MSS. which can scarcely be touched without falling to pieces. And there he must toil for two years more, till his work is finished.—And what next? How will our Universities, and the Government, and the India Company show that they understand the boon which Mr. Lane has conferred upon them? The common notion of welcoming a book is, taking a single copy; or five, or ten copies. Is this what will be done in the case of this rare book, which it is certain the public will never buy? One of the European powers understands the matter better than this;—understands too that tokens of appreciation should be given so timely as that they may cheer the toils of the labourer, and assure him that he is not working in vain. The King of Prussia has been first, as usual, to give encouragement. Since my return, I find that he has sent a commissioner to Egypt, by way of London, to make arrangements for the establishment and diffusion of the work. I rejoice at this: but I feel some shame that a foreign government should first have the honour, —after the Duke of Northumberland—of welcoming and fostering the work of an English scholar.

In thinking of Mr. Lane's household, and the happy hours I spent among them, it occurs to me to mention thus publicly (what it would certainly never occur to

Mr. Lane and his family that I should mention in relation to them) the idea that struck me there, and many times since,—what a pity it is that such lads as his nephews are not looked to to occupy some such public offices in the East as are at present filled imperfectly from the imperfect oriental education of English youths at home. Here is Stanley Poole,—well educated as an English youth, and trained in a virtuous and religious English home in the heart of the East,—fit, at the same time, to live among the people of the East all his days;—speaking their languages like his mother tongue, seasoned to their climate, habituated to their ways, and familiar with their minds:—what a waste it will be if such a youth should be destined to any occupation in life which might as well be discharged by any other good and clever and accomplished Englishman, when there is such a want of well qualified diplomatic and consular agents, and (what is more important still) scientific travellers who can make their way freely, and use fully their opportunities in the East! While we keep at work such expensive arrangements as we have at home for the preparation of oriental officers and agents, what a pity it seems not to use the rare chance, when it presents itself, of securing the services of promising youths in whom are united the advantages of an English and an Eastern education! I say this wholly of my own accord, and without consultation with any one: and I shall be very glad if I find that any one who can act in the matter is of my opinion.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HAREEM.

I saw two Hareems in the East; and it would be wrong to pass them over in an account of my travels; though the subject is as little agreeable as any I can have to treat. I cannot now think of the two mornings thus employed without a heaviness of heart greater than I have ever brought away from Deaf and Dumb Schools, Lunatic Asylums, or even Prisons. As such are my impressions of hareems, of course I shall not say whose they were that I visited. Suffice it that one was at Cairo and the other at Damascus.

The royal hareems were not accessible while I was in Egypt. The Pasha's eldest daughter, the widow of Defterdar Bey, was under her father's displeasure, and was, in fact, a prisoner in her own house. While her father did not visit her, no one else could: and while she was secluded, her younger sister could not receive visitors: and thus, their hareems were closed.—The one which I saw was that of a gentleman of high rank; and as good a specimen as could be seen. The misfortune was that there was a mistake about the presence of an interpreter. A lady was to have met us who spoke Italian or French: but she did not arrive; and the morning therefore passed in dumb show: and we could

not repeat our visit on a subsequent day, as we were invited to do. We lamented this much at the time: but our subsequent experience of what is to be learned in a hareem with the aid of an intelligent and kind interpretess convinced us that we had not lost much.

Before I went abroad, more than one sensible friend had warned me to leave behind as many prejudices as possible; and especially on this subject, on which the prejudices of Europeans are the strongest. I was reminded of the wide extent, both of time and space, in which Polygamy had existed; and that openness of mind was as necessary to the accurate observation of this institution as of every other. I had really taken this advice to heart: I had been struck by the view taken by Mr. Milnes in his beautiful poem of "the Hareem;" and I am sure I did meet this subject with every desire to investigate the ideas and general feelings involved in it. I learned a very great deal about the working of the institution; and I believe I apprehend the thoughts and feelings of the persons concerned in it: and I declare that if we are to look for a hell upon earth, it is where polygamy exists: and that, as polygamy runs riot in Egypt, Egypt is the lowest depth of this hell. I always before believed that every arrangement and prevalent practice had some one fair side,—some one redeeming quality: and diligently did I look for this fair side in regard to polygamy: but there is none. The longer one studies the subject, and the deeper one penetrates into it,—the more is one's mind confounded with the intricacy of its iniquity, and the more does one's heart feel as if it would break.

I shall say but little of what I know. If there were

the slightest chance of doing any good, I would speak out at all hazards;—I would meet all the danger, and endure all the disgust. But there is no reaching the minds of any who live under the accursed system. It is a system which belongs to a totally different region of ideas from ours: and there is nothing to appeal to in the minds of those who, knowing the facts of the institution, can endure it: and at home, no one needs appealing to and convincing. Any plea for liberality that we meet at home proceeds from some poetical fancy, or some laudable desire for impartiality in the absence of knowledge of the facts. Such pleas are not operative enough to render it worth while to shock and sadden many hearts by statements which no one should be required needlessly to endure. I will tell only something of what I saw; and but little of what I thought and know.

At ten o'clock, one morning, Mrs. Y. and I were home from our early ride, and dressed for our visit to a hareem of a high order. The lady to whose kindness we mainly owed this opportunity, accompanied us, with her daughter. We had a disagreeable drive in the carriage belonging to the hotel, knocking against asses, horses and people all the way. We alighted at the entrance of a paved passage leading to a court which we crossed: and then, in a second court, we were before the entrance of the hareem.

A party of eunuchs stood before a faded curtain, which they held aside when the gentlemen of our party and the dragoman had gone forward. Retired some way behind the curtain stood, in a half circle, eight or ten slave girls, in an attitude of deep obeisance. Two

of them then took charge of each of us, holding us by the arms above the elbows, to help us upstairs.—After crossing a lobby at the top of the stairs, we entered a handsome apartment, where lay the chief wife,—at that time an invalid.—The ceiling was gaily painted; and so were the walls,—the latter with curiously bad attempts at domestic perspective. There were four handsome mirrors; and the curtains in the doorway were of a beautiful shawl fabric, fringed and tasselled. A Turkey carpet not only covered the whole floor, but was turned up at the corners. Deewáns extended round nearly the whole room,—a lower one for ordinary use, and a high one for the seat of honour. The windows, which had a sufficient fence of blinds, looked upon a pretty garden, where I saw orange trees and many others, and the fences were hung with rich creepers.

On cushions on the floor lay the chief lady, ill and miserable-looking. She rose as we entered; but we made her lie down again: and she was then covered with a silk counterpane. Her dress was, as we saw when she rose, loose trowsers of blue striped cotton under her black silk jacket: and the same blue cotton appeared at the wrists, under her black sleeves. Her headdress was of black net, bunched out curiously behind. Her hair was braided down the sides of this headdress behind, and the ends were pinned over her forehead. Some of the black net was brought round her face, and under the chin, showing the outline of a face which had no beauty in it, nor traces of former beauty, but which was interesting to-day from her manifest illness and unhappiness. There was a strong expression of way-

wardness and peevishness about the mouth, however. She wore two handsome diamond rings; and she and one other lady had watches and gold chains. She complained of her head; and her left hand was bound up: she made signs by pressing her bosom, and imitating the dandling of a baby, which, with her occasional tears, persuaded my companions that she had met with some accident and had lost her infant. On leaving the hareem, we found that it was not a child of her own that she was mourning, but that of a white girl in the hareem: and that the wife's illness was wholly from grief for the loss of this baby;—a curious illustration of the feelings and manners of the place! The children born in large hareems are extremely few: and they are usually idolised, and sometimes murdered. It is known that in the houses at home which morally most resemble these hareems (though little enough externally) when the rare event of the birth of a child happens, a passionate joy extends over the wretched household:—jars are quieted, drunkenness is moderated, and there is no self-denial which the poor creatures will not undergo during this gratification of their feminine instincts. They will nurse the child all night in illness, and pamper it all day with sweetmeats and toys; they will fight for the possession of it, and be almost heart-broken at its loss: and lose it they must; for the child always dies,—killed with kindness, even if born healthy. This natural outbreak of feminine instinct takes place in the too populous hareem, when a child is given to any one of the many who are longing for the gift: and if it dies naturally, it is mourned as we saw through a wonderful conquest of personal jealousy by this general

instinct. But when the jealousy is uppermost,—what happens then?—why, the strangling the innocent in its sleep,—or the letting it slip from the window into the river below,—or the mixing poison with its food;—the mother and the murderess, always rivals and now fiends, being shut up together for life. If the child lives, what then? If a girl, she sees before her from the beginning the nothingness of external life, and the chaos of interior existence, in which she is to dwell for life. If a boy, he remains among the women till ten years old, seeing things when the eunuchs come in to romp, and hearing things among the chatter of the ignorant women which brutalise him for life before the age of rationality comes. But I will not dwell on these hopeless miseries.

A sensible looking old lady, who had lost an eye, sat at the head of the invalid: and a nun-like elderly woman, whose head and throat were wrapped in unstarched muslin, sat behind for a time, and then went away, after an affectionate salutation to the invalid.—Towards the end of the visit, the husband's mother came in,—looking like a little old man in her coat trimmed with fur. Her countenance was cheerful and pleasant. We saw, I think, about twenty more women,—some slaves,—most or all young—some good-looking, but none handsome. Some few were black; and the rest very light:—Nubians or Abyssinians and Circassians, no doubt. One of the best figures, as a picture, in the hareem, was a Nubian girl, in an amber-coloured watered silk, embroidered with black, looped up in festoons, and finished with a black boddice. The richness of the gay printed cotton skirts and sleeves

surprised us: the finest shawls could hardly have looked better. One graceful girl had her pretty figure well shown by a tight-fitting black dress. Their heads were dressed much like the chief lady's. Two, who must have been sisters, if not twins, had patches between the eyes. One handmaid was barefoot, and several were without shoes. Though there were none of the whole large number who could be called particularly pretty individually, the scene was, on the whole, exceedingly striking, as the realisation of what one knew before, but as in a dream. The girls went out and came in, but, for the most part, stood in a half circle. Two sat on their heels for a time: and some went to play in the neighbouring apartments.

Coffee was handed to us twice, with all the well-known apparatus of jewelled cups, embroidered tray cover, and gold-flowered napkins. There were chibouques, of course: and sherbets in cut glass cups. The time was passed in attempts to have conversation by signs; attempts which are fruitless among people of the different ideas which belong to different races. How much they made out about us, we do not know: but they inquired into the mutual relationships of the party, and put the extraordinary questions which are always put to ladies who visit the hareems.—A young lady of my acquaintance, of the age of eighteen, but looking younger, went with her mother to a hareem in Cairo (not the one I have been describing) and excited great amazement when obliged to confess that she had not either children or a husband. One of the wives threw her arms about her, intreated her to stay for ever, said she should have any husband she liked, but

particularly recommended her own, saying that she was sure he would soon wish for another wife, and she had so much rather it should be my young friend, who would amuse her continually, than anybody else that she could not be so fond of. Everywhere they pitied us European women heartily, that we had to go about travelling, and appearing in the streets without being properly taken care of,—that is watched. They think us strangely neglected in being left so free, and boast of their spy system and imprisonment as tokens of the value in which they are held.

The mourning worn by the lady who went with us was the subject of much speculation: and many questions were asked about her home and family. To appease the curiosity about her home, she gave her card. As I anticipated, this did not answer. It was the great puzzle of the whole interview. At first the poor lady thought it was to do her head good: then, she fidgetted about it, in the evident fear of omitting some observance: but at last, she understood that she was to keep it. When we had taken our departure, however, a eunuch was sent after us to inquire of the dragoman what "the letter" was which our companion had given to the lady.

The difficulty is to get away, when one is visiting a hareem. The poor ladies cannot conceive of one's having anything to do; and the only reason they can understand for the interview coming to an end is the arrival of sunset, after which it would, they think, be improper for any woman to be abroad. And the amusement to them of such a visit is so great that they protract it to the utmost, even in such a case as ours

to-day, when all intercourse was conducted by dumb show. It is certainly very tiresome; and the only wonder is that the hostesses can like it. To sit hour after hour on the deewán, without any exchange of ideas, having our clothes examined, and being plied with successive cups of coffee and sherbet, and pipes, and being gazed at by a half-circle of girls in brocade and shawls, and made to sit down again as soon as one attempts to rise, is as wearisome an experience as one meets with in foreign lands.—The weariness of heart is, however, the worst part of it. I noted all the faces well during our constrained stay; and I saw no trace of mind in any one except in the homely one-eyed old lady. All the younger ones were dull, soulless, brutish, or peevish. How should it be otherwise, when the only idea of their whole lives is that which, with all our interests and engagements, we consider too prominent with us? There cannot be a woman of them all who is not dwarfed and withered in mind and soul by being kept wholly engrossed with that one interest,—detained at that stage in existence which, though most important in its place, is so as a means to ulterior ends. The ignorance is fearful enough; but the grossness is revolting.

At the third move, and when it was by some means understood that we were waited for, we were permitted to go,—after a visit of above two hours. The sick lady rose from her cushions, notwithstanding our opposition, and we were conducted forth with much observance. On each side of the curtain which overhung the outer entrance stood a girl with a bottle of rose water, some of which was splashed in our faces as we passed out.

We had reached the carriage when we were called back:—his Excellency was waiting for us. So we visited him in a pretty apartment, paved with variegated marbles, and with a fountain in the centre. His Excellency was a sensible-looking man, with gay, easy and graceful manners. He lamented the mistake about the interpreter, and said we must go again, when we might have conversation. He insisted upon attending us to the carriage, actually passing between the files of beggars which lined the outer passage. The dragoman was so excessively shocked by this degree of condescension, that we felt obliged to be so too, and remonstrated; but in vain. He stood till the door was shut, and the whip was cracked. He is a liberal-minded man; and his hareem is nearly as favourable a specimen as could be selected for a visit; but what is this best specimen? I find these words written down on the same day, in my journal: written, as I well remember, in heaviness of heart. "I am glad of the opportunity of seeing a hareem: but it leaves an impression of discontent and uneasiness which I shall be glad to sleep off. And I am not conscious that there is prejudice in this. I feel that a visit to the worst room in the Rookery in St. Giles's would have affected me less painfully. There are there at least the elements of a rational life, however perverted; while here humanity is wholly and hopelessly baulked. It will never do to look on this as a case for cosmopolitan philosophy to regard complacently, and require a good construction for. It is not a phase of natural early manners. It is as pure a conventionalism as our representative monarchy, or German heraldry, or Hindoo caste; and the most atrocious in the world."

And of this atrocious system, Egypt is the most atrocious example. It has unequalled facilities for the importation of black and white slaves; and these facilities are used to the utmost; yet the population is incessantly on the decline. But for the importation of slaves, the upper classes, where polygamy runs riot, must soon die out,—so few are the children born, and so fatal to health are the arrangements of society. The finest children are those born of Circassian or Georgian mothers; and but for these, we should soon hear little more of an upper class in Egypt.—Large numbers are brought from the south,—the girls to be made attendants or concubines in the hareem, and the boys to be made, in a vast proportion, those guards to the female part of the establishment whose mere presence is a perpetual insult and shame to humanity. The business of keeping up the supply of these miserable wretches,—of whom the Pasha's eldest daughter has fifty for her exclusive service,—is in the hands of the Christians of Asyoot. It is these Christians who provide a sufficient supply, and cause a sufficient mortality to keep the number of the sexes pretty equal: in consideration of which we cannot much wonder that Christianity does not appear very venerable in the eyes of Mohammedans.

These eunuchs are indulged in regard to dress, personal liberty, and often the possession of office, domestic, military, or political. When retained as guards of the hareem, they are in their master's confidence,—acting as his spies, and indispensable to the ladies, as a medium of communication with the world, and as furnishing their amusements,—being at once

playmates and servants. It is no unusual thing for the eunuchs to whip the ladies away from a window, whence they had hoped for amusement; or to call them opprobrious names; or to inform against them to their owner: and it is also no unusual thing for them to romp with the ladies, to obtain their confidence, and to try their dispositions. Cases have been known of one of them becoming the friend of some poor girl of higher nature and tendencies than her companions; and even of a closer attachment, which is not objected to by the proprietor of both. It is a case too high for his jealousy, so long as he knows that the cage is secure. It has become rather the fashion to extenuate the lot of the captive of either sex: to point out how the Nubian girl, who would have ground corn and woven garments, and nursed her infants in comparative poverty all her days, is now surrounded by luxury, and provided for for life: and how the Circassian girl may become a wife of the son of her proprietor, and hold a high rank in the hareem: and how the wretched brothers of these slaves may rise to posts of military command or political confidence; but it is enough to see them to be disabused of all impressions of their good fortune. It is enough to see the dull and gross face of the handmaid of the hareem, and to remember at the moment the cheerful, modest countenance of the Nubian girl busy about her household tasks, or of the Nubian mother, with her infants hanging about her as she looks, with face open to the sky, for her husband's return from the field, or meets him on the river bank. It is enough to observe the wretched health and abject, or worn, or insolent look

of the guard of the hareem, and to remember that he ought to have been the head of a household of his own, however humble: and in this contrast of what is with what ought to have been, slavery is seen to be fully as detestable here as anywhere else. These two hellish practices, slavery and polygamy, which, as practices, can clearly never be separated, are here avowedly connected; and in that connexion, are exalted into a double institution, whose working is such as to make one almost wish that the Nile would rise to cover the tops of the hills, and sweep away the whole abomination. Till this happens, there is, in the condition of Egypt, a fearful warning before the eyes of all men. The Egyptians laugh at the marriage arrangements of Europe, declaring that virtual polygamy exists everywhere, and is not improved by hypocritical concealment. The European may see, when startled by the state of Egypt, that virtual slavery is indispensably required by the practice of polygamy; virtual proprietorship of the women involved, without the obligations imposed by actual proprietorship; and cruel oppression of the men who should have been the husbands of these women. And again, the Carolina planter, who knows as well as any Egyptian that polygamy is a natural concomitant of slavery, may see in the state of Egypt and the Egyptians what his country and his children must come to, if either of those vile arrangements is permitted which necessitates the other.

It is scarcely needful to say that those benevolent persons are mistaken who believe that Slavery in Egypt has been abolished by the Pasha, and the importation of slaves effectually prohibited. Neither the Pasha nor

any other human power can abolish slavery while Polygamy is an institution of the country, the proportion of the sexes remaining in Egypt what it is, there and everywhere else.

The reason assigned by Montesquieu for polygamy throughout the East has no doubt something in it:—that women become so early marriageable that the wife cannot satisfy the needs of the husband's mind and heart: and that therefore he must have both a bride and a companion of whom he may make a friend. How little there is in this to excuse the polygamy of Egypt may be seen by an observation of the state of things there and in Turkey, where the same religion and natural laws prevail as in Egypt. In Egypt, the difficulty would be great of finding a wife of any age who could be the friend of a man of any sense: and in Turkey, where the wives are of a far higher order, polygamy is rare, and women are not married so young. It is not usual there to find such disparity of years as one finds in Egypt between the husband and his youngest wife. The cause assigned by Montesquieu is true in connexion with a vicious state of society: but it is not insuperable, and it will operate only as long as it is wished for. If any influence could exalt the ideas of marriage, and improve the training of women in Egypt, it would soon be seen that men would prefer marrying women of nearly their own age, and would naturally remain comparatively constant: but before this experiment can be tried, parents must have ceased to become restless when their daughter reaches eleven years old, and afraid of disgrace if she remains unmarried long after that.

I was told, while at Cairo, of one extraordinary family where there is not only rational intercourse and confidence at home, and some relaxation of imprisonment, but the young ladies read !—and read French and Italian ! I asked what would be the end of this : and my informant replied that whether the young ladies married or not, they would sooner or later sink down, he thought, into a state even less contented than the ordinary. There could be no sufficient inducement for secluded girls, who never saw anybody wiser than themselves, to go on reading French and Italian books within a certain range. For want of stimulus and sympathy, they would stop ; and then, finding themselves dissatisfied among the nothings which fill the life of other women, they would be very unhappy. The exceptional persons under a bad state of things, and the beginners under an improving system must ever be sufferers,—martyrs of their particular reformation. To this they may object less than others would for them, if they are conscious of the personal honour and general blessing of their martyrdom.

The youngest wife I ever saw (except the swathed and veiled brides we encountered in the streets of Egyptian cities) was in a Turkish hareem which Mrs. Y. and I visited at Damascus. I will tell that story now, that I may dismiss the subject of this chapter. I heartily dreaded this second visit to a hareem, and braced myself up to it as one does to an hour at the dentist's, or to an expedition into the City to prove a debt. We had the comfort of a good and pleasant interpreter ; and there was more mirth and nonsense than in the Cairo hareem ; and therefore somewhat less

disgust and constraint: but still it was painful enough. We saw the seven wives of three gentlemen, and a crowd of attendants and visitors. Of the seven, two had been the wives of the head of the household, who was dead: three were the wives of his eldest son, aged twenty-two; and the remaining two were the wives of his second son, aged fifteen. The youngest son, aged thirteen, was not yet married; but he would be thinking about it soon.—The pair of widows were elderly women, as merry as girls, and quite at their ease. Of the other five, three were sisters:—that is, we conclude, half-sisters;—children of different mothers in the same hareem. It is evident at a glance what a tragedy lies under this; what the horrors of jealousy must be among sisters thus connected for life;—three of them between two husbands in the same house! And we were told that the jealousy had begun, young as they were, and the third having been married only a week.—This young creature, aged twelve, was the bride of the husband of fifteen. She was the most conspicuous person in the place, not only for the splendour of her dress, but because she sat on the deewán, while the others sat or lounged on cushions on the raised floor. The moment we took our seats I was struck with compassion for this child,—she looked so grave, and sad and timid. While the others romped and giggled, pushing and pulling one another about, and laughing at jokes among themselves, she never smiled, but looked on listlessly. I was determined to make her laugh before we went away; and at last she relaxed somewhat,—smiling, and growing grave again in a moment: but at length she really and truly

laughed; and when we were shown the whole hareem, she also slipped her bare and dyed feet into her pattens inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and went into the courts with us, nestling to us, and seeming to lose the sense of her new position for the time: but there was far less of the gaiety of a child about her than in the elderly widows. Her dress was superb;—a full skirt and boddice of geranium-coloured brocade, embossed with gold flowers and leaves; and her frill and ruffles were of geranium-coloured gauze. Her eyebrows were frightful,—joined and prolonged by black paint. Her head was covered with a silk net, in almost every mesh of which were stuck jewels or natural flowers: so that her head was like a bouquet sprinkled with diamonds. Her nails were dyed black; and her feet were dyed black in chequers. Her complexion, called white, was of an unhealthy yellow: and indeed we did not see a healthy complexion among the whole company; nor anywhere among women who were secluded from exercise, while pampered with all the luxuries of eastern living.

Besides the seven wives, a number of attendants came in to look at us, and serve the pipes and sherbet; and a few ladies from a neighbouring hareem; and a party of Jewesses, with whom we had some previous acquaintance. Mrs. Y. was compelled to withdraw her lace veil, and then to take off her bonnet: and she was instructed that the street was the place for her to wear her veil down, and that they expected to see her face. Then her bonnet went round, and was tried on many heads, —one merry girl wearing it long enough to surprise many new comers with the joke.—My gloves were stretched and pulled all manner of ways, in their

attempts to thrust their large, broad brown hands into them, one after another. But the great amusement was my trumpet. The eldest widow, who sat next me, asked for it, and put it to her ear; when I said "Bo!" When she had done laughing, she put it into her next neighbour's ear, and said "Bo!" and in this way it came round to me again. But in two minutes, it was asked for again, and went round a second time,—every body laughing as loud as ever at each "Bo!"—and then a third time! Could one have conceived it!—The next joke was on behalf of the Jewesses, four or five of whom sat in a row on the deewán. Almost everybody else was puffing away at a chibouque or a nargeeleh, and the place was one cloud of smoke. The poor Jewesses were obliged to decline joining us; for it happened to be Saturday: they must not smoke on the sabbath. They were naturally much pitied: and some of the young wives did what was possible for them. Drawing in a long breath of smoke, they puffed it forth in the faces of the Jewesses, who opened mouth and nostrils eagerly to receive it. Thus was the sabbath observed, to shouts of laughter.

A pretty little blue-eyed girl of seven was the only child we saw. She nestled against her mother; and the mother clasped her closely, lest we should carry her off to London. She begged we would not wish to take her child to London, and said she "would not sell her for much money."—One of the wives was pointed out to us as particularly happy in the prospect of becoming a mother; and we were taken to see the room in which she was to lie in, which was all in readiness, though the event was not looked for for more than half a year.

She was in the gayest spirits, and sang and danced. While she was lounging on her cushions, I thought her the handsomest and most graceful, as well as the happiest, of the party: but when she rose to dance, the charm was destroyed for ever. The dancing is utterly disgusting. A pretty Jewess of twelve years old danced, much in the same way; but with downcast eyes and an air of modesty. While the dancing went on, and the smoking, and drinking coffee and sherbet, and the singing, to the accompaniment of a tambourine, some hideous old hags came in successively, looked and laughed, and went away again. Some negresses made a good back ground to this thoroughly Eastern picture. All the while, romping, kissing and screaming went on among the ladies, old and young. At first, I thought them a perfect rabble; but when I recovered myself a little, I saw that there was some sense in the faces of the elderly women.—In the midst of all this fun, the interpretess assured us that "there is much jealousy every day;" jealousy of the favoured wife; that is, in this case, of the one who was pointed out to us by her companions as so eminently happy, and with whom they were romping and kissing, as with the rest. Poor thing! even the happiness of these her best days is hollow: for she cannot have, at the same time, peace in the hareem and her husband's love.

They were so free in their questions about us, and so evidently pleased when we used a similar impertinence about them, that we took the opportunity of learning a good deal of their way of life. Mrs. Y. and I were consulting about noticing the bride's dress, when we found we had put off too long: we were asked how we

liked her dress, and encouraged to handle the silk. So I went on to examine the bundles of false hair that some of them wore; the pearl bracelets on their tattooed arms, and their jewelled and inlaid pattens.—In answer to our question what they did in the way of occupation, they said "nothing:" but when we inquired whether they never made clothes or sweetmeats, they replied "yes."—They earnestly wished us to stay always; and they could not understand why we should not. My case puzzled them particularly. I believe they took me for a servant; and they certainly pitied me extremely for having to go about without being taken care of. They asked what I did: and Mrs. Y., being anxious to do me all honour, told them I had written many books: but the information was thrown away, because they did not know what a book was. Then we informed them that I lived in a field among mountains, where I had built a house; and that I had plenty to do; and we told them in what way: but still they could make nothing of it but that I had brought the stones with my own hands, and built the house myself. There is nothing about which the inmates of hareems seem to be so utterly stupid as about women having any thing to do. That time should be valuable to a woman, and that she should have any business on her hands, and any engagements to observe, are things quite beyond their comprehension.

The pattens I have mentioned are worn to keep the feet and flowing dress from the marble pavement, which is often wetted for coolness. I think all the ladies here had bare feet. When they left the raised floor on which they sat, they slipped their feet into their high pattens,

and went stumping about, rather awkwardly. I asked Dr. Thompson, who has admission as a physician into more houses than any other man could familiarly visit, whether he could not introduce skipping-ropes upon these spacious marble floors. I see no other chance of the women being induced to take exercise. They suffer cruelly from indigestion, — gorging themselves with sweet things, smoking intemperately, and passing through life with more than half the brain almost unawakened, and with scarcely any exercise of the limbs. Poor things! our going was a great amusement to them, they said; and they showed this by their intreaties to the last moment that we would not leave them yet, and that we would stay always.—"And these," as my journal says, "were human beings, such as those of whom Christ made friends!—The chief lady gave me roses as a farewell token.—The Jewish ladies, who took their leave with us, wanted us to visit at another house: but we happily had not time.—I am thankful to have seen a hareem under favourable circumstances; and I earnestly hope I may never see another."

I kept those roses, however. I shall need no reminding of the most injured human beings I have ever seen, —the most studiously depressed and corrupted women whose condition I have witnessed: but I could not throw away the flowers which so found their way into my hand as to bespeak for the wrongs of the giver the mournful remembrance of my heart.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PRESENT CONDITION OF EGYPT.

I FIND in my journal the following complaint. "One pregnant fact here is that one can get no reliable information from the most reliable men. About matters on which there ought to be no difference of statement, we meet with strange contradictions; such as the rate and amount of tax, &c. In fact, there are no data; and there is little free communication. Even a census does not help. The present census, we are told, will be a total failure—so many will bribe the officials to omit their names, because of the poll-tax." Thus it is that neither I nor any other traveller can give accounts of any value of the actual material condition of the people of Egypt. But we have a substantial piece of knowledge in this very negation of knowledge. We know for certain that a government is bad, and that the people are unprosperous and unhappy in a country where there is a great ostentation of civilisation and improvement, side by side with mystery as to the actual working of social arrangements, and every sort of evasion on the part of the people. We have a substantial piece of knowledge in the fact that men of honour, men of station, men of business, men of courage, who have all the means of information which

the place and time permit, differ in opinion and statement about every matter of importance on which they converse with inquiring strangers. I saw several such men. They were quite willing to tell me what they knew; and they assigned frankly the grounds of their opinions and statements: but what I obtained was merely a mass of contradictions so extraordinary that I cannot venture to give any details: and if I give any general impressions, it can be only under the guard of a declaration that I am sure of nothing, and can offer only what I suppose on the whole to be an indication of the way in which the government of Mohammed Alee works.

Of the Pasha himself I have little or nothing to say. It is a mere impertinence for a passing traveller to estimate the character of the man. That will be a study for the future historian: and it ought to be a wise historian who will hereafter review the life of the man, from its beginning to its close, estimating his temperament, his position, his intercourses and his opportunities, so as to decide on his personal merits,—to judge him as a man. It may be easier to estimate his relation to his people as a matter of fact, apart from the question of his personal value: but I know of no man in the country who is qualified to do this: and of course no stranger who is anxious not to mislead will attempt it.—I never saw the Pasha, except once in his carriage. He was gone up the river, to look about him and depose Selim Pasha, when we returned to Cairo. And if it had not been so, we could merely have seen him by meeting him in the gardens at Shoobra, or in some such transient way as would have

yielded us no real knowledge about him.—Having thus explained how small were our means of information, I will bring together here the few fragments I could collect of knowledge or probability.

One thing is certain: that, in his endeavours to improve the civilisation of his people, Mohammed Alee has omitted the first step, which is essential to all substantial advance. He has given them no security of property or other rights. Moreover, he seems to be unaware that this security is the only ground of improvement. He appears never to have learned that national welfare can arise from no other basis than national industry; and that there can be no reliable national industry where no man is sure of receiving the rewards of his labour. He appears not to see that public works, of whatever magnitude and utility, are merely monumental as long as the people who are to work at them have to be caught like game, marched to the spot, and kept there by companies of soldiers, and paid at his mere will and pleasure;—such of them as are not killed off by his mistakes in the provision of food and labour-saving tools. He appears never to have considered that schools, however grand in expence, and in their appearance on paper, will not enlighten the people at large while parents snatch up their children and hide them, on the mere rumour of the approach of his recruiting parties, or maim the young creatures in time to prevent their being chosen for the schools at all. He seems not to see that the love of knowledge cannot grow among the people while he sets his schooling before them as an evil for which he gives in compensation money, maintenance, and the

prospect of a handsome provision in life. He appears not to see that his people cannot become orderly tax-paying subjects while every peasant is liable to ruin whenever his next neighbour fails to pay his dues. The moment the tax-collector is mentioned, the inhabitants of a village will fly to the mountains, and hide there, leaving their crops and goods at the mercy of the government officers: and it does not strike their prince that such a flight is not a step in civilisation. He appears to forget that the people will not become more religious while he possesses himself of the endowments of mosques, promising to keep up their condition, but so neglecting to do so as that all go to decay but those which have strong claims on the piety of the Mohammedans. He does not perceive that lands will not be the better tilled for his seizing on them, while the title deeds are carefully concealed, in hope of a favourable change by and by. He does not see that every man is discouraged from improving his condition while the bad faith of the government, through the corruption of its agents, is a matter of course;—the general rule, to which the fellah and the journeyman find no exceptions. The Pasha may, if he can find the means, cover the land with his public works, his schools, his factories, and his cattle from Dongola; but his people will continue to decline in numbers and resources till he can induce a certain portion of them to endeavour to improve their own condition. Among his many enterprises, this, which should have been the first, appears never to have entered his head. That the population is declining, I have myself no doubt. One official gentleman may point to the plague and

cholera as the causes of a merely temporary depopulation of particular spots, which indicates nothing of the condition of the whole country; and another may reckon up the new canals made in his time: but these considerations are no set off against the evidence there is of decreasing numbers, and of the extent of land perpetually going out of cultivation. It is clear that the truth will not be learned by means of a census, while the agents take bribes to set down a greater or smaller number, or have to make a guess at the population of a village which they find deserted. If the population be decreasing, the fact may be for a while concealed by stout denial: if it be increasing, the fact must soon show itself, to the satisfaction of every body, in a country which certainly once contained above three times the number of the present inhabitants, while exporting food to a wide range of neighbouring states. In a country where there is so much more than room for every body, so much fertility ready to every one's hand, an increase of population must be rapid and evident, under circumstances which admit of it at all: and if, in such a country, there is no evident increase, but a general persuasion of its decline, what can be thought of its ruler's boast of advancing civilisation!—There was a time when the Nile Valley was regularly inhabited by a population of 8,000,000. The number of settled inhabitants is believed to be now not more than 2,500,000; and it is, to all appearance, still declining, as it has been from the beginning of the century.

I cannot say that I saw much during my voyage which could serve as material for an opinion on this

subject: but I saw something. I saw one new canal in Upper Egypt; and, to set against this, I saw many and large tracts of land let out of cultivation, showing evident signs of former irrigation and drainage, and sprinkled over, or bordered by ruined cottages or villages. I saw a few factories struggling for existence, while it was evident to English eyes that the only security for their permanency was in the improvement of agriculture;—the natural occupation of the Egyptians, and that to which Nature perpetually invites them, and for which she would reward them, if the tyranny and bad faith of Man did not interfere. But how is agriculture to improve under such arrangements as the following?—The cultivator undertakes to till a certain quantity of land,—all the land, it is understood, being the Pasha's property, except such as he pensions or gratifies certain parties with. Some, I am aware, declare that private property in land, of a much older date than the Pasha's life, does exist to a great extent. Others, whom I think higher authority, say there is little or none, though the title deeds of a large quantity are hidden away, in hope of better times.—And, by the way, what a telling fact it is that there should be any doubt about such a point as this among well-informed men on the spot!—At all events, whether the land is the Pasha's or another's, the cultivator engages, in return for being furnished with all that is needful for its cultivation, to hand over a stipulated amount (not proportion) of the produce, after harvest. He receives, among other requisites, an order for a good and sufficient quantity of seed-corn from the government granary.—When he presents the order, the great

official gentleman at the granary directs a subordinate officer to supply the applicant with three-quarters of the specified quantity, he retaining the other quarter for his own fee. The second officer subtracts a second quarter; and the cultivator sows his land with half the proper seed. Of course, when it comes up thin, he considers what he shall do. The probability is that at harvest time, he will go out in the night, and filch from his neighbours' fields, while those neighbours may be in his fields, doing the like. When the day of reckoning comes, one or more of the neighbours (it may be remembered that some of my party saw eight) may be chained and led off to be bastinadoed for nonpayment of dues. Or, as some other friends of mine saw, the Pasha may send a force to seize the land of a whole district, because some of the cultivators may be unable, or be supposed to be unable, to pay their rent.—While such is the state of things, and in the absence of any promise of improvement, the stranger does not see how manufactures should grow out of the agriculture of Egypt, or an increasing population out of either. Nor is it easy to suppose that any circumstances which may lie out of the stranger's sight can neutralise such facts as these.

The state of affairs does not seem to be mended by the Pasha's practice of giving away his villages,—which is the same thing as giving away the people who inhabit them. When, for instance, it is inconvenient to pay to any claimant or favourite five hundred purses a year, the Pasha will give half the money and five or six villages. Then, of course, the uncertainty of the peasants' lot at best is aggravated by new liabilities:

he depends on the temper, fortunes, and business habits of his new proprietor, while he is not relieved from the corruption of the agents with whom he has to deal. The mischief of the Middleman system exists everywhere, whoever be the proprietor; and while the proprietor may make matters worse than the average, he can hardly lighten the evils of such a system, in any one village.—As might be expected, no such spectacle is ever seen as a native bettering his condition, or attempting to do so. A foreigner, whether he be a slave from Circassia, or a man of science from France, Italy or England, may rise to high honours and great wealth; but if any native born Egyptian can improve his rank and fortunes, I never heard of such; and it is certain that the people generally have no other view, no further hope, than obtaining bare necessaries from season to season; and I might say, in regard to too many, from day to day.

And now, what are we to think of the boasted public works of Egypt? By all means let them proceed, if they aid production and transit. For as much as they are a good in themselves, let them proceed. But let it be remembered that public works in Egypt do not arise from a firm foundation of national industry, and that the people who work at them are virtually slaves. The case is just the reverse of that of the public works of Ancient Egypt. The old Pharaohs, natives of the Nile Valley, raised their mighty palaces and temples by the hands of the captives they brought into slavery from foreign lands. Now we see the opposite case of a Greek ruler, his throne surrounded by foreigners, raising the monuments of his reign by the hands of the

enslaved nation whom he calls his subjects. Those who can may choose between the two cases for preference. In each case, there is much vain-glory in the enterprise, and much barbarism in the way of carrying it out. The old Pharaoh thought to honour his gods, according to the morality of his time. and made no pretence of benefiting his slave-labourers. The modern Pasha does homage to the morality of *his* time by professing to aim at the good of his people; but he outrages every right and every interest of the many thousands who are driven to work at his patriotic enterprises. As we have seen, nearly a hundredth part of the whole present population of the country (23,000 out of 2,500,000) were killed off in six months, in the making of the Mahmoudieh canal. After such an experiment as this, the prosecution of other public works, by labourers no better fitted and prepared to achieve and desire them, appears to those on the spot a barbarism equal to any that can be charged upon any heathen temple-builder of them all.

As for other labouring classes than the cultivators,—the boatmen are, I am told, the most fortunate, and therefore the most intelligent and prudent. They are sure of the money they earn, and are exempt from the extortion which ruins the fortunes, and breaks the spirit of other classes of labourers. As for the insecurity and extortion, almost all the working classes seem as badly off as the cultivator. Everybody has heard of Ibraheem Pasha's fine garden at Roda. The labourers in that garden are paid nominally a piastre and a quarter per day. Out of this, they have to feed themselves. This they might possibly do, if they really

received the money: but they are paid in corn, or some other produce which it is convenient so to dispose of; and this produce is reckoned at a price higher than they can obtain for it.

At the Sugar-refinery, near this garden of Ibraheem Pasha's, the people are paid with molasses, in a similar manner; and, in addition, they have to bribe the measurer of the molasses to give them due measure,—it being an understood thing that he will help himself out of either their purses or their molasses.

While on the subject of the Pasha's public works, it should be remembered, in justice to him, that he is under strong stimulus to prosecute them. I am not, as I said before, attempting to estimate the character of the Pasha, but only to tell the very little I could learn of the condition of his people: but while his public works, with all their ostentation, stand in such mournful contrast with the misery of his people, it would be unjust to him not to mention that he has about him men of various European nations, who endeavour to serve both their national and individual interests by stimulating him to enterprises in which they may be wanted, or their country may be served. However shrewd the old man may be on the whole, however he may amuse himself by receiving flatteries and holding out hopes, and hanging out caprices, he cannot, in his state of crude civilisation, be always clear-sighted and prudent. He may be easily dazzled by the glory proposed to him of doing something which shall make France and England wonder; something which shall make the whole world think him the most patriotic ruler in it.

At the same time, we see how cautious he can be about matters which he really understands. Some people on the spot, as well as many at a distance, wonder that a man who acted so wisely and well as the Pasha did about our communication with India, when nothing better could have been hoped from him than that he would have closed the passage through Egypt, should not yet have made a canal or railway to the Red Sea, as he is incessantly urged to do. Those who so wonder may be assured that there is more in the matter than has been presented to them. It is a case which the Pasha happens to understand, and about which he chooses to take his time, and to judge for himself. He knows all about the shallows at both ends of the proposed ship canal, and he knows also the precise depth of the interests engaged in the railway scheme. He has amused himself by seeing locomotives run on a little railway before his palace: he looked, and laughed, and stroked his beard, and talked of the devil being in it; and he has some reason to think that the devil would be in it indeed if he should be in a hurry to lay down the rails which, as he knows, lie at hand, wanting to be used. He knows what a devil he would raise among the Bedoueens if he rashly took from them the carriage of persons and goods through the Desert. What could he do with these wild tribes, if he deprived them of their only profitable employment? And how could he compensate them for the loss of the Desert transport by which they now live? If the railway did not interfere with the Bedoueens, being used only for India passengers and their luggage and the mails, it may be asked whether it would answer to the Pasha to

make a railroad for this purpose merely, and to receive the proceeds only twice a month. He may think that an inland canal, from the Nile to Suez, would answer better, as it would be in use every day for the transport of corn and other produce. He may think that the whole matter, however important to England, may be so dubious in regard to Egypt as not to be hastily proceeded in at the risk of rousing the Bedoueens to harass the country. If he appears to people in London and Paris as dilatory and uncertain about undertaking either of these works as he has been rash and positive about others, it is clear that there must be a reason for his new slowness and uncertainty: and that reason may be other than one of foreign policy. When I hear that either canal or railroad is certainly begun in earnest, and not merely surveyed for, I shall believe that it may be at work in time. Till then, I am not disposed to think we shall have either during the old man's life. If he goes seriously into the undertaking at all, I think he will make a canal. If he makes a canal, I think it will be an inland one,—from the Nile to Suez. And if he makes a railroad, I think it will not be the English one which has been so earnestly pressed on his attention, both from England and on the spot. The only thing I am sure of, however, is that people at home had better not decide what the Pasha ought to do, and represent the matter as a very plain and simple one. For my own part,—while seeing as distinctly as any one the advantage to my own country of an improved passage across the isthmus of Suez, and after having learned on the spot all that I could on every side, I see that it is a

matter so complicated at present with difficulties of many kinds, that I am glad not to be obliged to form an opinion on what ought to be done.

I really feel very doubtful about sending this chapter through the press,—so meagre as it is, and yet so vague. I could have made it much fuller, and far more interesting and distinct, if I had written down what I was told, —or either side of what I was told. But, as I said before, I could not rely on the information, while entirely relying on the honour of those who kindly gave it. I have thought it best to offer only the little that I believe to be true. Of this little I cannot say how much might be modified by facts which may lie behind; and I feel that I know scarcely any thing of the modern Egyptian polity but the significant fact that nothing can be certainly known.

CHAPTER XXIV.

GARDENS OF RODA AND SHOOBRA.—HELIOPOLIS.—PETRIFIED FOREST.—TOMBS OF THE MEMLOOK KINGS.—THE NILOMETER.—LEAVING CAIRO.

THE roses which hang over the wall of the garden in the island of Roda are a pleasant sight to the traveller returning from the south. As some of our party had letters to the gentleman who is in charge of the place, we went to see it. The fame of this garden proves how difficult it must be to have a good garden at Cairo. Besides the roses (which were not abundant) we saw a few anemones and violets; and that was nearly all. The fruits are oranges, dates and bananas, excellent; grapes, pretty good; peaches and nectarines not good; melons bad. Neither fruits nor flowers can satisfy one who knows what gardening is in Europe. Sometimes, there is drought; and then again, the river comes up occasionally to destroy every thing,—to drown the garden. There is to be a steam-engine to water the place with; and thus the drought will be kept off.—I believe it is the fashion to admire this garden, and to imagine it peopled by the Houris of Ibraheem Pasha's hareem. We were told by the gardener that the ladies had been twice; but that their going was an exceptional event. This gentleman can hardly wish it otherwise if, as I

believe is true, these wives of a grey-bearded man behave like disorderly children, doing mischief to the flower-beds in their senseless play.—The only thing that struck me as at all beautiful in any part of the garden was an elegant bamboo, which was a treat to the eye. Everywhere else it was painful to see the attempt at making an English garden of an arid plot, where it seemed as if all the plants had quarrelled, and were trying how far apart they could keep.

We were delighted, after this, with the Pasha's garden at Shoobra. It has a character appropriate to the country. It is formal, but exceedingly pretty; studded thick with parterres of roses, geraniums and stocks; and thick set as possible with orange and lemon trees. The Djebel is charming;—the hill ascended by a succession of terraces connected by a trelliced ascent, which conducts to a fine point of view. Such a formal and blossomy garden is in strong contrast with scenery round; and the true charm of a garden is there accordingly. We thought it the only place worthy of the name that we had seen in Egypt.—The kiosks round the central fountain are beautiful; and one of them is a truly splendid apartment. If the ordinary gas-lamps were absent, and better glass present in the windows, and more flowers about the fountain, this spot would nearly fulfil our ideas of garden luxury in the East.—I cannot imagine why the Pasha's windows are so badly glazed. In these days of universal plate glass, it is strange to look round the apartments of his palaces, and see his brilliant furniture, and gorgeous bijoux from Paris contrasting with the coarse, greenish, seamed window panes. I would advise the European

power which is most anxious to propitiate Mohammed Alee to send him out a freight of plate glass windows. I can assure such European power that a vast commotion of envy and jealousy will be excited in those circles where every present made to the Pasha is regarded as an event in the politics of the world. Come now! which of the politicians of the world will be quickest to glaze the Pasha's windows?

The ride from Cairo to Shoobra is the pleasantest we found in the neighbourhood; I might almost call it the only one. It is under an avenue of picturesque spreading trees, chiefly acacias, through which the tilled lands on either hand show themselves, refreshing the eyes. The Nile, spreading abroad in reaches, or flowing between shoals, is visible also; to-day in a state of singular commotion, from the strength of the wind. The dust flew in clouds, and the river broke in waves over the shoals.

It was just such weather the day (February 19th) we went to that mournful place,—old Heliopolis. We were to have made our first trial of camel-riding that day; but the wind was too high, though it might permit us to ride lowlily, on our asses, through the fenced and cultivated country which lies between Cairo and the solitary obelisk. Our ride was pleasant enough while it was among fields, and under the shelter of hedges and avenues of acacia. On our return by a different route, we were almost strangled with wind and sand.

The obelisk looks well from a distance, springing from among trees: but as the sole relic of the once brilliant little city, the University of old Egyptian learning, it is a mournful object enough. When one

comes near, one finds its very hieroglyphics filled up and plastered over by the wild bees. Round its base there is a hollow, fruitlessly dug to ascertain how deep its platform lies. The surface of the land must have risen very much. Yet the circuit of mounds indicates where the remains of the city lie. This circuit of mounds is what one should come to Heliopolis to see. It is a moment not to be forgotten when one stands at the foot of the obelisk, and looks round through trees and over-stretches of sand at these mounds, and thinks of Joseph coming here to fetch his wife, and celebrating the marriage with all the courtly and priestly pomp of the time:—and of Moses, sitting here at the feet of the priests, nurtured with such care and wisdom as would be given to the education of the son of Pharaoh's daughter:—and of Plato, dwelling within this circuit for thirteen years, as it is said, and almost daily perhaps, in all that time, passing the spot where we are standing now, and looking up at the tapering lines of sculptures, as we are now looking up at the bee-cells with which those sculptures are filled up. This was one glimpse more into the old world of Egypt, after the cloud curtain had seemed to cover all. After yielding this brief glimpse, it closed again, to open no more.

On our return, we were taken to see, in a sort of garden, the tree of Joseph and Mary; a very old sycamore, under which, as Jews and Mohammedans alike believe, the Holy Family reposed when they fled into Egypt,—by this honour rendering the tree immortal,—as one would think it must be, if this be really it.

In this direction lies the (so-called) Petrified Forest; an absurd name, meant probably to convey the fact

that the quantity of petrified wood is surprisingly large. The ride to this spot is so interesting that it matters little what lies at the end of it. After threading the narrow ways of the city, we emerged by the fine "gate of Victory,"—the Bab e' Nusr,—into the eastern Desert, in view of the Tombs of the Memlook Kings, past whose courts and domes and minarets we rode in among the sandhills. We had a fine view of the road to Suez, which wound away to our left; and then we entered the region of rock and sand, of heat and drought, where, in a few days, we were to make our home for many weeks. In about an hour, we began to note some odd-looking stones lying about in the sand, and among ordinary looking pebbles. These were pieces of petrified wood. As we advanced, they lay thicker; and before we returned, we had certainly seen an astonishing quantity. Fragments of palm trunks, approaching to the size of logs, were perhaps the commonest kind: but there were several kinds of wood; even the bamboo was there, with its joints distinctly visible.

Of course, we visited the Tombs of the Memlook Kings,—commonly but erroneously called the Tombs of the Caliphs. What a descent from the Tombs of the Kings that we had seen up the river! Yet these well repay a visit; and it may be worth while to describe one of them, very briefly. These tombs look almost as well when one rides among them as from the terrace of the citadel, where one is so struck with the pale yellow domes and minarets, rising against their ground of darker sand. Now those domes and spires stood up bright and sharp against the cloudless sky. Round

the base of the dome of some are inscriptions, in coloured tiles,—white letters on a dark blue or other ground. Some of the walls outside are in courses of yellowish white and red, alternately; the white being the limestone of the neighbouring hills, and the red a mere daub of paint upon the stone. These tombs are going to decay so fast, that the next generation of travellers will see but little of them. Some of the walls are slanting to their fall: others show gaping rents; and many stones are carried away by the builders of some new edifice.

The threshold across which we stepped into the enclosure of one of these tombs was of grey granite, split down the very middle of an antique sculptured figure, whose cartouche remained entire. Thus do men go on making for themselves inviolable tombs by violating those of their predecessors! This fractured sculpture was laid down for a door-step over which the kingly pride of this Memlook sultaun might pass to its last repose: and now men cross this threshold, to carry away the stones of the newer edifice,—but not to serve for another royal tomb.

Within the court, we found a dry and meagre bit of garden, and a well covered with a shattered wooden dome. Along two sides of the court were dwellings; those of one side ruined; those of the other inhabited by tenants who have them free. There is no competition for these almshouses; for the people are becoming fewer in the land, and there is plenty of houseroom. Apartments as good as these, and more convenient for situation, may be had in Cairo for next to nothing; and there is therefore no eagerness to live rent free in

this place.—On a third side is a wall, with a beautiful minaret at one corner. This minaret is fast going to ruin: but one of the gentlemen made his way to its upper gallery, whence he obtained a fine view,—even to the second station on the Suez road.—On the fourth side of the court is the Mosque, with the tomb of the sultaun at one end, and that of his hareem at the other,—each under a dome. The loftiness of this range was very striking: and indeed I never was in any mosque where I did not wonder afresh at the height of the dome, and the magnificence of the spring of the pillars. The handsome stairs and pulpit of the mosque, and its rich covered and inlaid screens are rotting away. The sordid decay was a desolate spectacle.

From hence we went to see a Coptic church,—which we found altogether disgusting, from its profane altar-piece to the swarms of fleas which inhabit its matting. There was a handsome carved screen; but nothing else that we could bear to look at. The pictures of saints were most audacious; and as for the altar-piece,—any Mohammedan who ever saw its central figure would be quite justified in classing these Christians with low idolators. It may be well to look into these places, to learn to be just towards the originals of other corrupted faiths, whose symbols may no more represent their primitive ideas than these Coptic pictures represent Christianity.

On Saturday the 20th, the weather was suitable for our first attempt at camel-riding; and we went to the Nilometer. We had committed the ordering of the apparatus to those whose business it was, and who

were supposed to understand the matter: and they had prepared for Mrs. Y. and me wooden boxes or chairs, instead of saddles. In these we set out from the Hotel d'Orient. The swaying motion, and the being carried as dead weight, were excessively disagreeable, and especially to one so fond of riding as I am. Being carried on a camel is too little like riding at best: but while one is on a saddle, and holds a rein, one may amuse one's-self with the semblance: but the being carried in a chair permits no such relief. Moreover, it is impossible so to fasten on the chair as that it shall never slip in the least on one side; and the leaning sensation is intolerable. It seemed very doubtful to me how long I could support this method of travelling; and I wondered what was to be done if my companion and I should have to protest against it in the middle of the Desert. Happily we were seen by Linant Bey, whom we met at dinner afterwards, at the Consul General's. He has travelled over more miles of desert than almost any civilised man, and knows all about it: and he told us at once that we must leave our chairs behind, and adopt such a method of cushioning our saddles as he would instruct us in. Before dinner was over, he was sent for, to follow the Pasha up the river immediately; but his instructions set us on our camels to the best advantage. I often afterwards rejoiced that he had chanced to see us that day.

We met in this ride two or three sons of Ibraheem Pasha's,—gentlemanly and lively-looking boys.—We crossed by a ferry boat to the island of Roda, to see the Nilometer, which I was surprised to find a very

pretty place;—a damp, dim chamber, tufted with water weeds;—steep stairs down into it; and a green pool and mud at the bottom:—in the centre, a graduated pillar:—in the four sides of the chamber, four pointed arches,—one filled in with an elegant grating:—round the cornice, and over the arches, Cufic inscriptions; and in two of the niches, within the arches, similar inscriptions. The crypt-like aspect of the chamber, with its aquatic adornments of weeds and mosses,—so perfectly in accordance with its purpose,—was charming—the charm being aided perhaps by a sense of the unique character of the place. I need not say that we did not see the base of the graduated pillar. We are told that it is never seen,—even when the Nile is at the lowest,—the yearly nominal cleaning out leaving yet a considerable deposit of mud. We were glad to have seen the Nilometer; and this was our last sight-seeing at Cairo,—unless it was the Ezbekeeyeh, the next day.

The great square of the Ezbekeeyeh is always gay on Sundays, when the Franks walk there after church, and the Mohammedans sit smoking in groups to watch them. Some of the returned pilgrims further enlivened it this day. There were a few tents, and some conjurors; and pilgrims walking with a flag and singing: and then they formed into a circle, and one man chaunted prayers. The eastern and western groups,—the turbans and burnooses here, and the French bonnets and mantles there,—all among the dark acacias, or crossing the gleams of bright sunshine, make a strange picture, not to be likened to anything I saw afterwards.

Monday, the 22d, was our packing day. I was to

carry nothing that would not travel in saddle-bags: so I took care that my saddle-bags should be very large. Having stuffed them with necessaries,—not forgetting plenty of paper and ink,—I put away all finery and delicate articles of dress or use, in trunks which were to meet us at Alexandria, three months afterwards. What kind of appearance I was to make at Jerusalem and Damascus, it was useless to consider now. Saddle-bags will not carry bonnets, caps and dresses which will not bear crushing; and all such were therefore left behind.—The hems of our gowns told rather a sad tale of the state of the floors in our hotel. We could only hope that the Desert would prove a cleaner floor. We had done our best by remonstrance here; but the answer to our petition to have our rooms cleaned was decisive:—it would be useless to clean our rooms, as they would be dirty again to-morrow! We had not our remedy in our own hands, as Swift had with his man Ralph; so we were obliged to be patient.

Remembering the scarcity of water which we were about to encounter for some weeks, I washed and dried this day the few things which remained over from the hands of the washerman. The occasion was more strange than the employment; and strangely I felt it. Here we were going to spend weeks in the newest scene and way of life the world could offer us. We were going into the dreariest wastes of the globe, with no means of existence but those which we carried with us. We were going to spend weeks among rocks and sands, wild Arabs, glaring suns, scorching winds, and a poor sprinkling of brackish pools. How should we like it? How should I, for one, bear it? How could I

tell beforehand? I had had some experience, in former years, of the hardships of travel in rude countries: but I had never tried anything like this.—More strange still was the thought of what we were going to see. Strange above all, perhaps, was the composure with which I let all the imagery of this extraordinary prospect pass before me. I could not detect in myself any alarm, any surprise, any kind of excitement: and I have little doubt of the same calmness being in the mind of every one of the large company who were this day preparing to set forth through the Desert.

And now,—as to where we were going. Before we left England, Mr. Y. had asked me what I thought of our going to Petra. I laughed, not at all supposing that he could be in earnest about English travellers,—and especially women,—going to Petra. In my youth I had read all the books of Arabian travel that I could get hold of; and I was aware of the extreme difficulty and danger of passing through Idumæa in those times, and up to the present day: I never gave a serious thought to the suggestion of going to Petra; nor did I suppose that any one else did.

Till within a few days of our departure, our plan had been, as a matter of course, to go by El Arish to Hebron and Jerusalem: and again, Mr. Y. had asked me how I should like to go to Petra, if we found we could get there from Hebron; and again I had laughed, not supposing him in earnest.—But a more distinct vision arose when many friends, residents of Cairo and passing travellers,—I think I may say all our friends,—advised and urged our going to Mount Sinai. This I did most heartily desire; and certainly not the less

when it appeared that a large party of travellers, including English, Scotch and Irish, were in hope,—a doubtful and vague hope, but still a hope,—of penetrating to Petra, on their way from Sinai to Jerusalem. If they could do it, so might we. But still, my thoughts barely glanced towards it; and when I was told the good news that we were going to Mount Sinai, I felt this quite enough, and did not yet look further.

The large party I have mentioned,—a company of as kind hearts as one can find in a chance wandering over the world,—wished us to join them. We held off from the junction, feeling that the fatigues of desert travelling would be quite enough for some of us, without any addition from the presence of numbers. As for me, I am a particularly unsociable member of a travelling party; as I suppose every deaf person must be who wishes to profit by the journey. It is impossible for a deaf person to listen from the ridge of a camel, and note the objects of travel at the same time. So my way must be to ride in silence during the travelling hours; and we did not expect to have strength left for any evening sociability. We therefore engaged our own sheikh and escort, and twenty camels, wished our friendly compatriots a good journey, and resolved to go by ourselves.

We were to set out on Tuesday morning, February 23rd. On the Monday we bade farewell to our Cairo friends; and Stanley Poole and his brother accompanied me to the terrace of the citadel, for one more enjoyment of that glorious view.—That evening, the mail from England arrived. In the morning, we

waited for letters; and Mr. E's. share detained us till after an early dinner.

For some days our preparations had been very visible in the court-yard and environs of our hotel. Mr. Y's. large tent, which was to house Mrs. Y. and me, had been stoutly lined for warmth at night. Our sheikh, Bishara, with his bright and genial face, had basked there in the sun every day, and given his advice on our affairs; and our camels had been brought to the spot. All this morning, the cross-grained brutes had been growling and groaning in the yard; and when their loads were put on, their vicious lamentations were horrible to hear.—Before two, p. m., we were mounted; and we paced forth in procession through the streets of Cairo. The sheikh wore under his blue burnoose, a brilliant dress of green satinet, striped with red and gold colour. The gentlemen were dressed half and half, Eastern and European. Alee and the cook were smoking after the toils of the morning:—my camel-driver kissed my camel repeatedly, and allured the creature to stoop and offer its huge lips to the salute.

From my high seat, I saw more of the deep, dim, wide interiors of the Cairo dwellings, and of the people at their trades, than I ever did before. This last view of the streets was the best: but there was something mournful in passing for the last time those picturesque alleys, and imposing mosques, and busy bazaars, and the captivating groups of oriental figures of which the eye never tires.—We passed out near the citadel, traversed the bazaar or market which was formed outside the gates, and entered upon the sand of the Desert.

I now thought camel-riding as easy as sleeping on a feather bed. I found afterwards how little first impressions are worth in such a case: but in this unexpected ease, and in the beauty about me, and the prospect of the journey before me, I was very happy, when lo! at about two miles from the city, there were the green and blue and white tents of the British travellers!—I supposed that they had been delayed, and that we should pass them: but no!—our camels were made to lie down, and we were made to dismount, on reaching the camp. This was Bissateen: and the escort never will go further than Bissateen the first day, that there may be an opportunity of supplying any needful article that may have been forgotten.—Here we were, after all, in junction with the British travellers;—a junction much approved by the escort, as conducing to the safety of all parties. We separated no more till we left Jerusalem, nearly two months afterwards.

We strolled about in the sunset light, bidding many a farewell to Cairo, which stood out clear and bright in the evening glow,—its citadel predominant. The green levels between us and the Nile looked flatter in surface and more vivid in colour than ever. Over westward were the Pyramids, glorious against the orange sky; and near us the palm grove belonging to Bissateen, and the wells where the women came with their water-pots and cords. Close at hand was our camp, with the Arabs in groups round the fires, and camels lying about as if they wanted to be sketched. We were not sorry now to have stopped for the night within sight of Cairo and the Pyramids.

As I consider this day the last of our Egyptian life,

I shall here close my first Part. It is true, we did not pass the Egyptian frontier for some days; but our life in the Desert was so Arabian in its character and interests as to belong to the Arabian section of this book.

Here, then, we take leave of Egypt,—to me by far the most interesting portion of our travels. I believe that some others did not find it so in the experience of their journey; and I hope my readers may not in the retrospect. And yet I should like them to feel with me in regard to the surpassing interest of Egypt, even at the cost of their relishing the latter half of my book less than the first.

PART II.

SINAI AND ITS FAITH.

"If I have beheld the Sun in his splendour,
Or the Moon advancing in brightness,
And my heart have been secretly enticed,
And my mouth have kissed my hand,—
This also were a crime to be punished by the judge;
For I should have denied the God who is above."

Job, XXXI. 26-28.

"Celsus seemeth here to me to do just as if a man travelling into Egypt, where the wise men of the Egyptians, according to their country-learning, philosophise much about those things that are accounted by them divine, whilst the idiots, in the meantime, hearing only certain fables which they know not the meaning of, are very much pleased therewith: Celsus, I say, doth as if such a sojourner in Egypt, who had conversed only with those idiots, and not been at all instructed by any of the priests in their arcane and recondite mysteries, should boast that he knew all that belonged to the Egyptian theology.—What we have now affirmed concerning the difference between the wise men and the idiots amongst the Egyptians, the same may be said also of the Persians, amongst whom the religious rites are performed rationally by those that are ingenious, whilst the superficial vulgar look no further in the observation of them than the external symbol or ceremony."—*Origen against Celsus.*

"And he who had believed (Moses) said, 'O my people, follow me: I will direct you into the right way. .... O my people, how is it that I invite you unto salvation, and ye invite me unto the fire? Ye invite me to deny God, and to associate with Him that of which I have no knowledge; but I invite you unto the Mighty, the Very Forgiving.'"—*Kurân*, ch. XL.

SINAI AND ITS FAITH.

CHAPTER I.

MOSES BEFORE THE EXODUS.—ROUTE TO THE RED SEA.—CAMEL-RIDING.

In travelling from the Nile to Mount Sinai, the chief interest is in following the track of the Israelites; and the person one thinks most of is Moses.

In the island of Roda we had seen the spot where, according to tradition, his bulrush cradle was found. At Memphis, we had been in the place of his abode; and at Heliopolis, in that of his education. According to a Mohammedan tradition, he was a learned priest of Heliopolis. Whether this is probable or not, he was certainly of the priestly caste, being adopted as a son of the royal house. At all events, the early part of his life, up to mature manhood, was passed in ease and in the leisure of learned pursuits, in the neighbourhood with which we were now familiar, and whose natural features were deeply impressed upon our minds by our grateful and admiring interest in his history. Its natural features (from which it is impossible now to exclude the Pyramids) were, however, all we had. Every change that Time and Man could effect has been

wrought; and we felt everywhere that only by its natural features could Moses himself now recognise the region where his mind was born and reared. The cities he knew are gone, and others have arisen on other sites. Of the race he knew, not a living man remains, and another has come into its place.

But we were going now into the region where his purposes were born, reared and accomplished. We were to see objects which he saw, and as he saw them;—the scene unchanged, and the people the same, (one may say) whom he met;—the same races, living in the same manner, and presenting the same aspect. For some weeks to come, we might look about us with his eyes, and become able, day by day, to enter more into his mind.

He had three times crossed the Sinai peninsula on which we were about to enter: three times, in very different states of mind. The first time, he was unhappy,—his heart heavy with the sense of the degradation of his Hebrew brethren, and his fortunes scattered to the winds by the act of sympathy with his race,—his slaughter of one of their task-masters,—which had come to the knowledge of Pharaoh. Away he went, across the peninsula, and to the opposite coast of the Eastern arm of the Red Sea, taking up his rest with the Midianites, who appear to have been more civilised than most of the tribes inhabiting the desert. It is supposed that they were engaged in commerce,—their position being favourable to it. Josephus says that the men were not shepherds, but left the care of their flocks to women. — The sheikh (or priest, for the word signifies both) whose daughter

Moses married, gave him the charge of his flocks, it appears.—In the solitudes to which he now retired with his family, shifting his tent from valley to valley, according to the needs of his flock, and sitting down beside the secluded springs among the rocky mountains, his mind wrought vigorously among the materials stored up by his careful education. There is no place like the Desert for fruitful meditation. There, among the immutable forms of nature, lives the Past, for those who know how to look for it. It will not rise to view among the changing scenes of social life, nor speak where the voices of men are heard. But in the austere silence of the Desert it presses its tale upon the tranquillised soul, and will, to one who knows, as Moses did then, and Mohammed after him, how to invoke, prophesy of the Future;—of its unborn child which is to redeem the human race from its sins and its burden of woes. Here, as Moses sat under the shrubby palm in its moist nook, or lay under the shadow of the rock, did the past come, at the call of his instructed memory, and tell him how these mighty Egyptians had been slaves as his Hebrew brethren now were, and how they had cast off the yoke of their bondage, and risen into a powerful nationality by driving out the foe who had oppressed them for a thousand years, and by restoring to their honours the Supreme and his attributes through whose aid they believed all great deeds to be achieved: and here, to his clear understanding, did the future promise the redemption of his race, and disclose the means by which it should be wrought. Here he learned to see,—not at once as in vision, but in the dawning of many days, and from the suggestions of many thoughtful years,—

how the redemption of the Hebrew race should be effected, how far the precedents of former times should be followed, and where they should be departed from; —what there was new and peculiar in the circumstances of his people, and how these circumstances should be dealt with. He saw that the Hebrews could not rise in revolt against their oppressors, as the Egyptians had done against their Shepherd conquerors; for the Hebrews had not the rights of native possession; and they were so debased by their servitude as to be incapable of warfare. He saw that they must be first removed from the influences which had made them what they were, and then elevated into a capability for independent social life.

He saw that they must be first removed, and then educated, before they could be established. In following out this course of speculation, he was led to perceive a mighty truth which appears to have been known to no man before him;—a truth so holy and so vast that even yet mankind seem scarcely able fully to apprehend it; —the truth that all Ideas are the common heritage of all men, and that none are too precious to be communicated to every human mind. It was his clear apprehension of this truth, and his intrepidity in bringing it into practice which made Moses the greatest of men, and the eternal benefactor of the world. He was before skilled in "all the wisdom of the Egyptians:" it was this which raised him above the collective wisdom of all their long line of priests, and made him worth more to the human race than all the sages together who have been born of it. His knowledge, even of spiritual things, vast as it was, was limited by the boundaries of

his time; but this one clear spiritual perception of human rights made him a benefactor for all time.—He did not rise to a higher view of God than his being a national god, and the greatest of gods: he regarded Jehovah as the god of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and not as the god of the Egyptians and mankind at large: but, limited as was his view of God, his recognition of the spiritual rights of Man was the fullest and noblest that has ever been obtained, or can, perhaps, ever be obtained. Warned by what he had seen in Egypt, his purpose was to admit to the divine knowledge which he held every individual of the people he belonged to. By his position in the priestly class in Egypt and his learning, he knew how the priests of Memphis and Heliopolis believed in One Supreme deity,—"the Unutterable," of whom they uttered not a word to any beyond their own class; and he had seen how they presented to the people for worship merely the deified attributes of their god, and consecrated objects whose sanctity they knew to be merely derived: and in the degradation of the popular mind he witnessed the effects of this mistaken and presumptuous reservation. As the images crossed him in his solitude of the religious feasts of the Egyptians, the gross brute worship into which they had sunk, and the foul superstitions in which they grovelled, he conceived the brave purpose,—the boldest enterprise, I believe, on record,—of admitting every one of Jehovah's people to the fullest possible knowledge of him, and to direct allegiance to him. Holding himself the knowledge of the Supreme Jehovah, he aspired, on behalf of his people, that they should have no other gods before Him. In

Egypt, he had seen the only theory of government of which perhaps he had conceived,—that of a theocracy,—corrupted in its workings by such a concealment of the Providential ruler as caused the people to rest their homage and obedience on the vicegerent, and become wholly insensible to that divine origin of their moral and material government which was acknowledged by the priests. The class who monopolised wisdom and knowledge recognised in the priestly brother whom they made king the favoured son and chosen agent of a divine ruler; but the people regarded their king as the ultimate ruling power. The bold purpose of Moses was to remove the medium, and to bring his brethren face to face with Jehovah as people and King.

When these purposes had grown out of his aspirations, the details of the enterprise grew from perception into purpose too. The Hebrews could never become enlightened amidst the darkness of popular life in Egypt. There could not be spiritual light in their houses, while "darkness that might be felt" brooded all about them. They could never be purified while the corruptions of idolatry swarmed within their dwellings, and among their dress and food,—coming up from the river, and down upon them in the very air. They could never be elevated in views and character while subject to contempt as "an unclean people" (as Manetho calls them) and to the wrongs of slavery.—They must be removed.

They must be removed:—but how and whither? They were cowardly, selfish, incapable of concert and of fidelity to a leader's purpose,—as the bulk of a body of slaves must ever be. Rising in revolt was out of the

question. A stealthy flight was equally impossible. They must come out in a body, and openly, and under the sanction of the government. And the superstition;—and yet more, the fears, of the governing power must be wrought upon, till the sanction was given.

But then, where were they to go? The countries from which their fathers had come were occupied by people as warlike as the Egyptians, and as superstitious. The sunken Hebrews could neither possess themselves of these countries, nor be safer from idolatry than in Egypt. They must be led into some empty place where, without disturbance, they might learn to live. They must be led into the Desert. No one knew better than Moses at this time, the privileges of life in the Desert. He had witnessed the hardihood, the self-denial, the trusting poverty, the generous hospitality, and the comparatively pure piety of the Arab tribes who lived in tents in Nature's ascetic retreats. These were the very qualities the Hebrews needed, and could never attain elsewhere. It was not civilisation and its lessons that they needed. Civilisation and slavery were indissolubly connected in their ideas. Discipline was what they needed; and not that discipline from the hand of man which must include more or less of slavery; but the discipline of Nature, whose service is perfect freedom. Here, while relaxing from the excessive toil which had broken them down, they were in no danger from indulgence. Here, while learning endurance, it would not be at the cost of that exasperation of feelings which had hitherto embittered their hardships. They would learn that submission to Nature which is as great

a virtue as submission to Man is a vice. Here, among the free winds, and bold suns, and broad shadows, with liberty to rove, and exemption from the very presence of Man, they might become braced in soul, free in mind, and disciplined in body, till they should become fit for an ulterior destination.—No doubt, Moses reverted with reverence to that prominent subject of Hebrew pride,—the greatness of his forefathers; and his hope for his brethren took the form of raising them into a state worthy of their origin. He thought of their father Abraham, pious, powerful, and rich in the wealth of the Desert: and he looked forward to the time when these sunken children of Abraham might so awe the whole region as to sit down where they pleased beside the springs, and rove among the boundless wastes, and pitch their tents anywhere under the starry sky, and then worship Jehovah before the door. As dwellers in tents had their great forefathers been strong and faithful to Jehovah; and by a life in tents must his brethren regain the hardihood and simple piety which their race had lost.

While Moses was thus leading Jethro's flocks in the Desert, and pondering the leading of that greater flock of which he was to be the Shepherd, the king of Egypt died;—that king who had adopted him as his grandson, and afterwards threatened his life on account of his homicide of the Egyptian whom he saw tyrannising over a Hebrew. It was early in the reign of his successor that Moses moved towards Egypt again; for the Exodus appears to have taken place in the fourth year of this Pharaoh,—Thothmes III.

This was his second journey over the peninsula of

Sinai. When his purposes were fixed and clear, he led back his flocks, and his family and servants, to Midian, and bade farewell to Jethro,—whom he met, the next time, under remarkable circumstances. He took his family with him; but they turned back to Midian, and left him to proceed alone.—With what a new heart must he now have crossed these wilds! Before, he was without a hope for his people or a purpose for himself, and those two hundred and fifty miles of rock and sand must have been a desert indeed! Now, his new hopes and purposes, springing up wherever he turned his eyes in this future scene of his enterprise, must have made the wilderness blossom as the rose.—He did not enter Egypt alone; for his elder brother met him. After consultation, they went together to the Hebrew district, Goshen, where their next business was to communicate their enterprise to the elders,—the heads of families who, as a remaining patriarchal custom, held such rule as now existed among the degraded people.

The third entrance of Moses upon the Desert is that which usually interests travellers most,—not only from its importance, but because modern travel follows its track. All the three were, as regarded Moses himself, equally interesting to me; for I cared little for being certainly on his very track while the scene was, in all its grand features, that in which he lived. But here, in this third transit, there was the great new interest of sympathy with the people whom he led. What this interest and sympathy may grow to is perhaps inconceivable to those at home who have only the vague and dim idea of the Desert that I had before I lived in it.

As everybody knows, learned men differ about the

road the Israelites took in leaving their Egyptian abodes. No one knows exactly where Goshen was, or where the fugitives crossed the Red Sea. It is not necessary to go over the arguments here, as I have no wish to prove that in the first instance we followed the Hebrew track. Most of our party, I believe, were convinced that we did; and among those so convinced, were the clergymen. I do not see that sufficient evidence exists to give even a preponderance of probability, and I have therefore no opinion on the subject. When once on the other side of the Gulf of Suez, the route is, for the most part, clear enough. The doubt is between two routes from the Nile to the Red Sea;—that by which travellers now go straight from Cairo to Suez, and the more southerly one called Wadee-el-Tiheh,—the Valley of the Wandering. This name shows which way tradition points out.

If the reader thinks it worth while here to look at a map, he will see that a valley runs, first south-east and then east, from the Nile, a little below Cairo, to the Red Sea, issuing at the bold promontory, Ras Attaka. Dr. Kitto and other learned speculators on the question distrust the tradition which has named this the Valley of the Wandering, and believe that it is the way by which Pharaoh hoped to drive the Hebrews back to the Nile. On this supposition, the Egyptian host followed the Hebrews to the head of the Gulf, and then southwards down its western shore, till the great headland, Ras Attaka, stopped their march, and there seemed nothing for them to do but to return to Goshen by the Wadee-el-Tiheh, which opened to their right hand.

However this may be, it was by the Wadee-el-Tiheh that we quitted the Nile, having the Djebel Attaka on our left hand, and a lower range of hills on the right. The two routes are about equally good for travelling purposes; and very good was the one we went by; hard gravel for the most part, or a firm pebbly ground, over which our attendants walked with as much ease as our camels.—And how many scores of miles did I walk in the Desert, during those five weeks! I found, as some others did, the motion of my camel more and more fatiguing and disagreeable, all the way; and, being at home a great walker, I had recourse, more and more, to my own feet,—little heeding even the heat and thirst in comparison with the annoyances of camel-riding. I have often walked from ten to fifteen miles in the noon hours, continuously, and of course at the pace of the caravan,—sometimes over an easy pebbly track,—sometimes over mountain passes,—sometimes cutting my boots to pieces on the sharp rocks; but always giving up when we came to deep sand. Walking in deep sand in the Arabian Desert, at noonday, is a true purgatory: but there is little deep sand. We did not believe that more than one-fifth of our Desert route was sandy.

As for the camel-riding,—I could not have conceived of any exercise being so utterly exhausting. The swaying motion, causing an unintermitting pull upon one part of the spine, which can by no means be exchanged for another, becomes at last perfectly intolerable, though easy and agreeable enough at the outset. —I would never say a word to encourage any woman to travel in the Desert, if she must do it on the back of a

camel. If she can walk as I do, well and good; and I am told it is easy and agreeable to go on a donkey from Cairo to Jerusalem by the El Arish route. The footing is good enough for asses and horses in the Arabian Desert,—as the beautiful riding of the sheikhs may prove:—it is the want of water that is the difficulty. A woman who can walk far and easily, and bear the thirst which is the chief drawback on walking in the Desert, may set out for Mount Sinai without fear. I was so far from being injured by my Desert travelling that I improved in health from week to week, after having been very unwell in Egypt. There is nothing to fear for a traveller who can walk: but a woman who has no alternative, and must ride her camel all the way, should consider well before she undertakes the journey.—As for all palankeens, panniers, chairs and boxes,—they are wholly insufferable, adding to the evil of the camel-pace, which cannot be got rid of, pains and penalties of their own.

Walking in the Arabian Desert is made more easy than in any portion of desert I saw up the Nile by the tracks, which are very conspicuous and rarely intermit. During our whole journey from Cairo to Mount Sinai, I saw only three or four places where I should have had any doubt of the road, if I had been alone. The tracks are simply discolorations of the dark pebbly ground or rocky platforms in some places, and a hardening of the sand in others. Sometimes scores of these tracks run parallel, winding away before and behind, and dying out of sight on either hand, so as greatly to moderate the sense of retreat and solitude in the Desert.

I have mentioned, in the camel riding, the only drawback I remember on the pleasure of Desert travelling. It is a large item in the account: but my impression of all the rest is now as of one long delight.

CHAPTER II.

DESERT TRAVEL.—THE RED SEA.—SUEZ.—LANDING IN ARABIA.—WELLS OF MOSES.

On the morning of Wednesday, February 24th, our camp was early astir. From this time, we found there was a competition among the dragomen of the different parties which should get their employers up and to breakfast first. Our party was usually the earliest. After our breakfast under the fading stars, we set off, and saw, as we looked behind us, the whole train winding on, between us and the brightening Pyramids and palms. We took our farewell view of the Nile Valley about eleven o'clock, when the last fragments of the purple line of vegetation disappeared behind the sand hills. From this day forward I obtained the management of my camel rein, which my driver was unwilling to give up. It was a single rein of woven goat's hair, heavy, but manageable. The head-gear of my camel was adorned with cowries. The creature was very sensitive, and the merest touch of the rein was enough to signify my pleasure. This was the easiest paced camel I rode; but I was induced to give it up, after a day or two, on account of its shying whenever I put up my umbrella, or opened map or book; and I saw it once run away at such a rate as to

reconcile me to having exchanged it for another. Our pace was very slow;—on an average, and including stoppages, not exceeding two and a half or three miles an hour. It was not permitted to any one to lose sight of the caravan; and the most heavily laden beasts of course determined the pace of all the rest. The slowest trot, or amble, was the most agreeable pace; and we enjoyed the relief of this daily after luncheon when the baggage camels had gone forwards; and I contrived it often at other times,—either by lingering till the train was nearly out of sight, and then overtaking it, or by pushing on where the tracks were clear, and I could not lose my way.

In the course of this first morning, we were allowed to dismount, to climb a sandy eminence called Moses' Seat, where, according to tradition, Moses took his station, to collect and review his multitude. The interest of the scene lay in its extreme wildness and desolation. Only three European parties had ever passed this way before us: and the novelty did, we believe, attract the attention of the roving Arabs who saw us, though they took good care that we should not see them. One dark head was this day observed peeping over the ridge of a sandhill; and the fluttering of garments showed that the spy had taken flight to his hidden comrades. This man was the only person we saw between Bissateen and Suez, except one group of Bishara's friends. There was a popping of guns one evening after dark, on account, we were told, of Bedoueens seen prowling about the camp: but whether this was true we do not know.

Our escort were all of Bishara's tribe; and some had

faces as prepossessing as Bishara's own. They were all armed,—with pistols, or match-locks, or short swords. A number of spears, stuck points upwards on camels' backs, glittered in the sun. Some of the Arabs wore sandals of fish skin; some were clothed in sheepskins, the woolly side inwards. All had their heads thickly covered, and where possible, with something white, at least in the middle of the day. For the most part, they trudged during the eight or nine hours of our daily travel; but sometimes they rode in turn.

We were surprised at the variety of the scenery, this first day; but we were not long in learning that there is endless variety in Desert travelling. To-day we saw wide valleys of hard gravel, narrow defiles, water-courses tufted with low tamarisks and dwarf thorny acacia, traces of pools left by former torrents, yellow slopes and mounds, dark and abrupt hills, and lime-stone eminences, embrowned with the soil, sometimes lofty enough to be called, in Egypt, mountains. The Djebel Rhaiboon is a black hill rising from amidst white sands; and I was struck by the streaky character of some of the soil, on emerging from the White Valley upon the Wadee Beda,—resembling cloud-shadows so exactly that it surprised me to see that there was not a cloud in the sky.—The White Valley is a fine winding defile, overhung by steep and imposing hills;—the very place for an assault from the Bedoueens, if our troop had been less strong.

We stopped this afternoon in the midst of undulating pebbly ground, where our tents were fixed, to our great satisfaction, further apart than at Bissateen, allowing us more liberty and domestic convenience than when

we were all so huddled together that conversation was overheard from tent to tent, and we could not stir out without stumbling over tent ropes. Of all the variety of ground on which we encamped during these weeks, we liked the pebbly soil the best. Hard sand was convenient; but there black beetles abound. Soft sand has usually large stones strewn upon it, under which scorpions and other reptiles hide. Of course, rock will not do, as the tent pegs cannot be driven in. Short grass, on which we often encamped in Palestine, is pleasant; but then there are earwigs and ants. The prettiest perhaps was at Petra, where lilies were growing under my bed: but, on the whole, there is nothing like smooth pebbles,—our floor on this first night.—On the Thursday, we encamped in the midst of a very wide valley, or plain, where hills rose in the east, purple in the sunset. From a distant rising ground, the encampment looked beautiful,—the green and white tents, and the camels lying round them, diminished almost to dots, and the smoke from the fires of the Arabs rising like blue waving threads. One of the clergymen made an admirable coloured sketch of this, which conveyed, to my eye, a better idea of the vast expanse of a Desert valley, and the smallness of a large encampment, than any illustration I ever met with in books. The colouring would not be believed in England; but it was very true. On the Friday, when the evening was coming on, our Sheikh showed us what Arab running is. He ran before us for some miles, crossing occasionally from side to side, on the look out for some pool or well which he expected to find. His running appeared like a rather lazy trot

till his diminishing figure proved to us how fast he got over the ground. He seemed to lose no breath, and feel no fatigue; and when we came near enough for nods and signs, his bright genial face was all smiles and cheerfulness. He found the pool at last; but a party of Arabs were clustered about it. They were friends of his, and they kissed very heartily. Some of our escort drank a little of the water; but it looked like muddy milk, and was nearly exhausted by the first comers; so that we all preferred what was in our water skins.

It may be as well to give here the order of our day, —of an average day,—for the amusement of those who may wish to know what life in the Desert is like.

We four carried with us two tents, and two servants besides our escort. In the larger tent, we dined and spent the evening; and there Mrs. Y. and I slept. In the smaller tent, the gentlemen slept and wrote their journals. Our servants were Alee, the dragoman, and Abasis the cook,—a young man from Cairo who served us faithfully, and satisfied us in every respect. He spoke little English, but understood us sufficiently. His English speech amused us very much. He made "Very well" go almost as far as our "Bono" and "Non bono" in Egypt. These two words seemed all that he could command under the emotions of parting, when the time at last came for saying farewell.

"Now, Abasis, we must say good-bye."

"Very well."

"I shall not forget you, Abasis. I shall tell my friends of you, if they come to Egypt, that you may serve them as well as you have served us."

"Very well."

"You will not forget us, Abasis."

"Very well,—no."

"Here is a little present for you. If you like this handkerchief for a turban, you will wear it, and remember me."

"Very well."

And all this time, his heart was full, while his words were so cool.—He carried under his charge what was called the Cook's tent,—a small affair under which he stowed his apparatus, and where he and Alee slept. His cooking was, of course, done in the open air, on a trivet which held three pans for burning charcoal, over which he put his saucepans and baking-plate, and where he toasted our bread. He had charge of the stores;—the water-skins, flour, biscuit, macaroni, cheese, condiments, butter, eggs, oranges and preserved fruits; and the wine and ale. It was his business to buy, keep and kill the fowls and sheep. He worked harder than any one else of the party; and I wondered that he held out so well. He had to be up to cook our hot breakfast by five o'clock,—giving us always fowl or hashed mutton, eggs and toast. He had then to pack up his stores and apparatus, and help in striking the tents. His fatigue of mere travelling was, of course, the same as ours; and when we stopped, he worked as hard as any one at the severe labour of pitching the three tents, before cooking our dinner, which was always ready within two hours of our dismounting. He furnished the boiling water and toast at tea; by which time, he must often have been half dead. Yet I never saw his face otherwise than earnest and wide

awake;—never knew him flag. It was really a pleasure to me, when I went out under the stars in the evening, to see him and Alee seated at their ease with their chibouques: but I believe they had seldom many minutes together of such rest.

At four o'clock in the morning, or earlier, Alee brought a light into our tent. Our tin basins had been filled the night before, and a pitcher of water and tin cups placed on the table. I always slept in what is called Levinge's bag,—an inexpressible comfort. Without it, I believe I should scarcely have slept at all; but, as it was, I lay down every night, absolutely secure from insects of every kind. The flies might hang in clusters, like bees, on the tent pole: the beetles might run over the floor, and the earwigs hide themselves under the counterpane, and fleas skip among the camel furniture; in my bag,—under its wide airy canopy, I was safe from them all, and from all fancies about them. It did not take me above five minutes in the day to put up and take down my canopy;—a small price to pay for comfort and good sleep.—As soon as we opened our tent door, while I was taking down my bag, and the gimlets which, screwed into the tent poles, served us for pegs to hang our things on, Alee carried out our table and its tressles and the camp-stools, and Abasis laid the cloth for our open-air breakfast. We sat down to it at five or soon after, when the stars were growing pale, and the translucent dawn began to shine behind the eastern ridges, or perhaps to disclose the sheeny sea.—While we were at our meal, we saw one after another of the other four parties come forth from their tents, and sit

down to table;—the two bachelor companions being always the last. They were generally sitting down just when I was walking off in advance, with my courbash (hide whip) and bag,—containing map, book, note-book, goggles and fan. By this time, the tents were down, in due succession; the camels were groaning and snarling, and the Arabs loading them,—with an occasional quarrel and fight, for variety.—Having learned from Alee or the Sheikh which way I was to go, I wandered forth; and many a glorious view I had of the sunshine breaking in among the mountain fissures, while the busy and noisy camp yet lay in deep shadow below. One by one, the company would mount and follow, or Mr. W. with his book, and Mr. E. with his chibouque, would set forth on foot. In a line, or in pairs or groups, the camels, with their riders, would step out slowly; and then the two lively young ladies, Miss K. and Miss C., would rouse theirs to a fast trot, and pass us all by.—When the sunshine reached me, or I had walked enough for the present, I put on my goggles, pulled my broad-brimmed hat over my eyes, and signed to my watchful camel driver. Then, down went the beast on its knees, and my driver set his foot on its neck while I sprang on, and settled myself with my stirrup and between my cushions, and stowed my comforts about me. When I had firm hold of the peg before and the peg behind, the creature was allowed to rise, and I sustained its three jerks,—two forward and one backward,—as well as I could.

At eleven o'clock, Abasis rode up with his tin lunch-box, to supply each of us with bread, cold fowl, or a hard egg, and a precious orange. Or, as oftener

happened, we looked out at that time for some shadow from a chance shrub, or in a rocky nook, where we might sit down to luncheon, while the baggage camels went forwards. That we might not be too far separated, we were not at first allowed more than twenty minutes for this rest.—It was a pretty sight,—the scattering about of the company among the patches and nooks of shade.

After three o'clock, the sheikh and dragomen began to look about, to choose our abiding place for the night. Where the sheikh points, or stands, or plants his spear, there it is to be. Then, as the camels arrive, they kneel down, and release their riders. This was the time of day when I found the heat the most oppressive;—in the half hour between arriving and taking possession of the tent. Within the tent too, it was often scarcely endurable till after dinner, though we looped up the sides, to obtain what air could be had. While the tent was preparing, I generally tried to sleep for a few minutes, on the sand or some neighbouring rock.—It required about half an hour to put up and furnish our tent. It was hard work to rear it, fix the poles, and drive in the pegs. Then Alee turned over every large stone within it, to dislodge scorpions, or other such enemies. This done, and the floor a little smoothed, he brought in the iron bedsteads and bedding, and the saddle-bags which held our clothes. Next came the mats;—two pretty mats, brought from Nubia, which covered the greater part of the floor. Then the table was placed in the middle, and four camp stools were brought; and basins of water, and a pitcher and cup. Mrs. Y. and I might now dress and

refresh ourselves, while Alee and Abasis put up the other two tents.

Mr. E. was to be envied at this time of day. He was in no hurry for his tent, for he was engrossed with his journal. He would secure a campstool, and lay his hand on his inkglass, and write as fast as possible till all was ready for him to dress; and then again perhaps till dinner. I could not do this. I was very well satisfied with myself if I wrote my journal after dressing and chibouque, and before dinner. I did it oftener between dinner and tea; and twice I let two or three days pass before I brought it up. One's journal is the chief nuisance in such travel as ours. There is no pleasure in it, one way or another. About one's duties at home there is always some pleasure, because one can do well what one undertakes: but one's journal is a perpetual irritation and mortification. It is such a mockery! When one's whole soul has been full and glowing for hours among marvellous scenes and new experiences, the only result in one's journal is a couple of pages of record which one wants to tear out as soon as written, in indignation at its poverty. But the deepest mortification of this kind is better than not keeping a journal. Anything is better than the shame and sorrow which must sooner or later ensue, when one finds the imagery of one's journey becoming hazy in the memory, and incidents and dates uncertain, and trains of thought no longer recoverable. It is worth any fatigue and annoyance at the moment, to secure certainty for all future time in regard to the knowledge obtained on the spot, and a complete array of pictures of the scenery one has passed through.—On the Nile,

it was easy to keep a full journal, and not wholly disagreeable. In the Desert, it required strong resolution; and I fear I should not have done it if I had not felt that the thoughts of this journey would be embittered to me for ever if I let it pass as a dream which must fade. It was purely for the peace of my own mind that I held myself to this irksome duty; for I had then no intention whatever of writing this book. Now I am, as I need not say, heartily thankful to be in possession of the mass of papers lying before me, in virtue of which the scenes and suggestions of my Eastern travel are securely mine for ever.—I say this in the hope that my testimony may strengthen some young future traveller against the indolence or humiliation which might interfere with his keeping a journal. He may be assured that however meagre his records and descriptions, he will be thankful for them hereafter; and that no present fatigue can be so painful as his future regrets if he entrusts to his memory what it will certainly let slip or spoil.—After all, there was some satisfaction in my journal,—at times when I had brought it up to the present moment, and when, as I was wiping my pen, a breath of air stole through the tent, promising a refreshing evening, and Alee appeared with the soup tureen, and the gentlemen came in, cheerful and hungry, and the bottle of ale (the greatest possible refreshment in the desert, except the chibouque) was visible in the corner. The thought of the finished journal certainly gave a zest to the dinner,—a relish which the two gentlemen must have daily enjoyed, for they were daily diligent.

Abasis gave us excellent dinners—good soup always:

mutton and fowls always; and these Arab cooks discover an astonishing variety of ways of cooking mutton. Then, there was macaroni, and potatoes; and always some nice pudding or fruit pie: excellent cheese; and a dessert of oranges and capital figs. Then the chibouques were brought,—at once the indispensable comfort and chief luxury of Eastern life:—a comfort of whose importance there no more conception can be formed at home than the people of the Guinea coast can appreciate our winter-clothing and fires. Then I usually went out, to survey the camp and scenery, and try to get rid of, or better endure, the sense of irritation from fatigue and heat which was at this hour the hardest to bear. By this time, the impression of that suffering is much weakened, while the images of the Arab fires, the dim tents and dark camels, the towering mountains fitfully lighted by the moon, or the dim plain, all canopied over by the lustrous heavens, or the quiet murmuring sea, flowing to my feet, are as fresh and delicious as ever. How often have I stolen round the camp, just beyond the tent ropes, enjoying the sight of the camel drivers before their fires, or the guard grouped about a lively story-teller! How often have I wandered away among the clefts of the rocks, or so far along the beach as that I might sing unheard all the beloved old music which I never utter at home, in our little island where one can never get out of earshot!—Sooner or later, however, Alee was seen going to our tent with the boiling kettle, and I was to be refreshed by tea. After tea, we were all more awake and lively,—just enough so to relish a rubber, though nothing else. A rubber kept us amused and

merry till ten o'clock; and I hardly think anything else would have done it. We cared little about it; but it was better than vainly trying to read, and being too sleepy to speak civilly.—At ten o'clock, the gentlemen went to their tent; Alee brought the water basins, and fastened down the tent curtain; and I put up my canopy, and made my bed, and was presently asleep.—Such was the ordinary course of our days in the Desert.

On the Saturday morning, our fourth day from Bissateen, I saw the Red Sea. At the moment when its distant gleam caught my eye, Miss C., who was at the head of the troop, turned and waved her hand, and there was an immediate press forward. The tracks turned northwards, and we were presently upon the beach. One and all dismounted, and snatched at the glorious shells which lay in heaps and banks along the shore. All pockets and bags were filled, and we were all presenting one another with the most exquisite shells we could find where all were beautiful. We were like a party of children; and like children, we were unaware of our folly. These shells were all dead, and must soon crumble into lime-dust. Nothing in our journey gave me a more distinct impression of our distance from home than this rapturous arrival on the shores of the Red Sea. Yet there were some serious thoughts connected with the spot. We were now at that point where many scholars believe that the Egyptian host overtook the Hebrews. All progress to the south was barred by the high promontory of Ataka, which juts into the sea; and if the Egyptians came from the north, the only escape for the Hebrews was by the way we had come, leading back only to the Nile.

The sea was blue and clear beyond description. Northwards, a narrow strip of shore lay between the sea and the brown, precipitous rocky mountains of the Egyptian coast. To the north-east, with the blue gulf between, lay the white line of Suez; and the Indian steamer was discernible, moored a few miles below. The Arabian hills, soft in their amethyst hues, shut in the whole to the east. It was an exquisite scene.

We proceeded northwards, and encamped on a charming spot,—on the hard sand below the mountains. The clear waters rippled up among the shelves of rock so as to tempt us irresistibly to bathe, though we were warned of the danger of sharks. Mrs. Y. and I could not believe that sharks would come into the shallows of the very shore; and we bathed accordingly; as I believe every one else did before the day was over; but we were told at Suez, the next morning, that the inhabitants never bathe; and that it is only rash strangers, ignorant of the ways of sharks, that venture to do so. On me, however, the warning was thrown away. I bathed whenever I could, in both gulfs; and we heard no more of sharks.

On Sunday, February 28th, we were to reach Suez in time for morning service: and, as the town was within sight, our own party pushed on before the others. It was starlight when I came out of the tent; and while we were at breakfast, the dawn disclosed the sheeny sea and the fissures of the gloomy mountains. We entered the gate of Suez between nine and ten o'clock, and were met by the agent of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, of which Mr. E. is a Director. Captain Linguist, the agent, showed us all possible

kindness, and rendered us every service he could think of. Among other things, he compelled us to accept his whole collection of shells, which he forwarded to Liverpool for us. To him it was, as he told us, a truly happy day. His ordinary intercourse with Europeans is necessarily very hasty and unsatisfactory. His office is to help the transit of India passengers; and they are always in a vast hurry, and anxious about their luggage. The talk with them is about carpet-bags, omnibuses and steamers. Till to-day he had not for many a month joined in worship, or heard a psalm, or sat down with his countrymen to quiet conversation, or taken them a leisurely walk. He will remember that Sunday, as I am sure we shall his kindness.

After a comfortable second breakfast at the hotel, which is kept by two Englishwomen, we went to an eminence near, where Captain Linguist pointed out to us the well whence only Suez obtains fresh water, and the first Station in the Desert; and, to the north, the end of the Gulf;—a stretch of two miles or so of shallow water. A few small vessels lay here, and along both shores to the southwards. Captain Linguist has followed out the traces of the ancient canal; and he can find no evidences that it was ever used, or even finished; and he believes therefore that it can afford no precedent for the proposed new one, even supposing the state of the waters and shore to be unaltered;—which nobody, I believe, does suppose.

We wrote letters in the evening, being glad of this last opportunity, for several weeks, of forwarding news to England.

The next morning, March 1st, Captain L. took us in

his boat over to the Arabian side. The wind was so light that we proceeded at the rate of less than two miles an hour; and the rest of our company passed us, and landed two hours before us. The baggage and escort had crossed the night before. The view of Suez from the water was finer than I should have supposed possible for such a miserable place: but such an atmosphere adorns every thing with the highest charms of colour. The light on the sides of the vessels, on the two minarets, and through the shallow waters, was a feast. The coral-shoals below, red and dark, contrasted with the pale green above the sandy bottom.

It was one o'clock when we landed; and the whole caravan, provisions and all, were gone on, without leaving word where we were to stop. Our camels and dragoman were awaiting us; but neither food, cook nor guide. Captain Linguist was delighted to improvise a luncheon for us at his country-house, at the Wells of Moses. He showed us his garden, which is well irrigated, and as productive as a garden can be in such a place. He showed us the ancient wells, all shrouded in bushy palms; and pointed out indications of moisture which encourage him to search for a fourth well. Of the three which we saw, one is built up with massive and ancient masonry. We were glad that our kind entertainer had such a resource as even this place. When weary with the solitude and irksomeness of his position, he comes over here, and drives away blue devils with a gallop over the sand hills, and plans of improvement about his country-house. The luncheon he gave us was extraordinary enough in its place to deserve mention. Here, among these dreary sands of

the Arabian shore, we had butter from Ireland, ale from England, wine from Spain, ham from Germany, bread and mutton from Cairo and Suez, cheese from Holland, and water from Madras! Truly, the dwellers on the Red Sea may well be advocates of free trade.—At half-past five P.M. Captain L. helped us to mount, and saw us on our way.

CHAPTER III.

JOURNEY TO SINAI.

THE heat was still excessive, and we were faint and fatigued at this evening hour, when we should have been sitting down to rest; and our whole day's ride was still before us;—a ride of twenty miles, as it turned out. Yet I look back with singular pleasure to that first Arabian ride. We might go as fast as we liked, being free from the baggage camels; and we were to ride as quietly as we could. So I put my camel to a trot, and pushed on, to see what I could see in Arabia. I looked out for Bedoueens on the hills; and many times I thought I saw them: but it always turned out to be a round stone instead of a man's head, or some fitful shadow on the slopes, instead of a crouching Arab. In only one instance do I believe now that I saw a spy watching from behind a ridge. The large, glorious sun presently went down clear behind the sands to our right; and just before, the full moon had come stealing up behind the eastern ridge,—at first a pale ghost, soon to brighten to a golden orb. Then I was struck by the sheen on the pebbly slopes, almost as bright as on water: and all the way I was perplexed by the altered proportions of every object in such a place and light. When I looked back, it made me almost

breathless to see our little party,—only four riders besides myself, moving in a space like that; and yet every ridge and stone looked huge till we came up to it. Two camel drivers were running beside us. When we had been riding above two hours, one of them began to scream horribly, and utter shrill calls; and from under the next shadowy slope an Arab sprang out, close to me as I rode ahead. It was only one of our escort, who had been left behind by the Sheikh to look for us. He told Alee that we had yet some way to go; and a long way indeed it seemed. We told one another when it was eight o'clock, and when it was nine, and still we trotted on, seeing nothing through the uncertain and perplexing light but the same wilds of rock and sand. At last, as I was gazing forwards intently, I saw a little flash, apparently on the very horizon; and then a report followed. The Sheikh had fired a gun for our guidance. We came to some tufts of tamarisk and other low shrubs in a water-course; and amidst these were the tents. Our over-dressed dinner was on table immediately,—that is, soon after ten o'clock; but Mrs. Y. and I craved tea, which presently revived us.—We now found that we had been the least distressed of the whole European party. Our comrades had found, on landing, that the Arab company had gone on: they had no kind friend at the Wells of Moses to give them luncheon: they had travelled the whole day without food, and were two hours and a half longer on the road than we.

The next morning we first encountered a high wind in the desert. The sand met us in streams. As riding under such a powdering was more disagreeable than

walking, when one could occasionally turn one's back to the wind, and take breath, I walked about eight miles; and by that time, the wind had moderated a little.—As I was afterwards riding ahead, I saw a palm among some sand hills; and my camel quickened its pace, and needed no persuasion to carry me up to the tree. More shrubby palms were now seen growing about a chink in the hill-side, where a little pool of water appeared. It was rather bitter, but drinkable. Our camels soon reduced it to sandy dregs. They thrust their heads together eagerly, and pushed hard for a drink; but I observed that each drank very little. From its bitterness, this well is called by some people the Marah of Scripture: but it is not generally supposed to be the actual place.—On referring to Burckhardt, I find, however, that he believes this to be the Marah of Exodus xv. 23. He says: — "We passed the well of Howara, round which a few date trees grow. Niebuhr travelled the same route, but his guides probably did not lead him to this well, which lies among hills, about two hundred paces out of the road. . . . . The water of the well of Howara is so bitter, that men cannot drink it; and even camels, if not very thirsty, refuse to taste it."—It was probably diluted by the rains, (which here fall and flow very copiously) when we tasted the water. We were nearly two months earlier in the season than Burckhardt; and we saw everywhere traces of recent floods in the water-courses. Burckhardt continues:—

"From Ayoun Mousa to the well of Howara we had travelled fifteen hours and a quarter. Referring to this distance it appears probable that this is the desert of

three days mentioned in the Scriptures to have been crossed by the Israelites immediately after their passing the Red Sea, and at the end of which they arrived at Marah. In moving with a whole nation, the march may well be supposed to have occupied three days; and the bitter well at Marah, which was sweetened by Moses, corresponds exactly with that of Howara. This is the usual route to Mount Sinai, and was probably therefore that which the Israelites took on their escape from Egypt."

The next day, (Wednesday, March 3d) I discovered how completely I had been possessed with the spirit of the desert by the sort of feeling with which I greeted a single tree. It was only a poor thorny-acacia, low and wide-spreading: but its importance to eye and mind cannot be judged of by those who have never seen a solitary tree,—the only vegetation within a wide horizon. As I was riding ahead, I waved my courbash to those behind, lest any body should miss the sight. But in a little while, there was much more to see. I came upon a clump of palms;—those bushy palms of the desert which are to my eye so much more beautiful than the tall trimmed palms,—trimmed for date-bearing,—which we see in cultivated regions, and in all pictures of the East. In the midst of this clump was a well; and along the deep water-course, for a considerable distance, tamarisks, acacias and palms were scattered and clumped. As several of the party dismounted here, I walked up the water-course, as far as I dared, till the sight of some strange Arabs, looking at me from behind the trees, turned me back.—Soon after remounting, we came upon a string of muddy

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pools in the water-course, where our camels drank. Everywhere in the desert, we were surprised by the number of water-courses, and the traces of torrents. We were almost hourly riding over or near that caked soil, curling up in large slices, which tells of a recent flood.

Here, and in far drier parts of the desert, we saw dragon-flies in abundance;—a sign, probably, of the rainy season being just over. It is curious that while no rain falls in the almost parallel and not distant Nile Valley, there should be abundant rains in this peninsular, usually in December and January. We saw a good many pigeons, and a few other birds; and under almost every bush, were the holes of the little jerboas.

Our place of encampment this evening was very charming. In a nook made by mountains meeting at right angles, the vanished torrent seemed to have spread abroad, rather than to have turned a sharp corner, while confined within banks. Still, this was in a valley; only the valley widened a little at this turn. In this nook grew palms in clumps; and there were little strips of grass bordering the tiny runnels in the sand; and in the crevices of the precipitous rocks were tufts of weeds, of a really dazzling green.—The scenery the next morning was transporting. I walked forwards for a few miles,—past a prodigious black rock which rose in grand contrast with the brown mountains; the sea, of the deepest blue, opening out at the end of the gorge, and bounded afar by the Egyptian hills, dressed in heavenly hues. We came down upon the sea, and went in and out, between it and the mountains, many times. The rocks were the most diversified I ever saw.

I noted them on the spot as being black, green, crimson, lilac, maroon, yellow, golden and white: and their form was that of a whole host of cones.—Then we entered upon the wilderness of Sin, and the plain was stony towards the striking entrance of Wadee Shelal. We had now left Burckhardt's track. He took the more northerly route to Sinai, by Wadee Sheikh, but returned to Cairo by the one we were on. We went by the more southerly track, which gave us the advantage of skirting Mount Serbal.

Some time after lunching under a projecting rock, we undertook the great pass in Wadee Shelal. It was necessary to dismount,—not so much on account of the steepness of the ascent, which was in fact a long zigzag staircase, as of its narrowness. A baggage-camel filled the space completely; and if one of these should press against a ridden camel, the rider's limbs would probably be crushed against the rock. I led my camel up the pass; and when I had crossed the ridge, my position seemed strange enough:—alone, leading my camel in a hollow way, where the heat was like the mouth of a furnace, and where I should hardly have supposed myself on our own familiar earth, but for the birds which flew up in the sunshine, and the dragon-flies that flitted by. I now seemed to feel, for the first time, true pity for the wandering Hebrews. What a place was this for the Hebrew mothers with their sucking babes! They who had lived on the banks of the never-failing Nile, and drunk their fill of its sweet waters, must have been aghast at the aspect of a scene like this, where the eye, wandering as it will, can see nothing but bright and solemn rocks and a sky without

a cloud. As I thought of their fevered children imploring water, and their own failing limbs where there was no shade in which to rest, I could imagine the agony of the Hebrew fathers, and well excuse their despairing cry, "Give us water that we may drink! Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of the land of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? . . . Wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us unto this evil place? It is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates: neither is there any water to drink." They were here in the early days of their wandering, when the freshness of the Nile Valley was vivid in their remembrance; and it was later in the year than when we travelled this way. To them, the sun was more scorching than to us; and the caked soil of the water-courses had become dry dust; and, as Burckhardt found at a yet earlier season, the scanty foliage of the thorny-acacia was all so dead and crisped with the heat as to ignite with a spark. The faith of the meditative and instructed Moses must have been strong to bear him up in such a scene: and what must have been the clamour and despair of the slavish multitude, whose hope and courage had been extinguished by that bondage which yet left their domestic affections in all their strength! At every step, we found the scriptural imagery rising up before our minds,—the imagery of overshadowing rocks, sheltering wings, water-brooks, and rain filling the pools:—even we, with all our comforts and our well-filled water-skins, relieved our mental oppression with imagery like this. But the poor Hebrews had no scriptures, no faith, no promises that

they could yet receive. To them, it was all evil and no hope. Well might Moses himself here sink below the level of his purposes, and cry "What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me." When my eye caught at the tufts of grass peeping from under the stones, and a green bush here and there in the ravines, I remembered that they would be gone before the summer, and that there were none when the Hebrews passed by.

It was at the end of one of these parched wadees that we encamped that night,—encompassed with precipitous rocks. The red granite mountains we were now in the midst of, are massive and awful beyond any other mountains I ever saw. The sunset lights, and the morrow's dawn dressed them in splendour, but scarcely relieved their gloom.—This had been a remarkable day; but the morrow was yet more so.

I was out at dawn on the morning of the 5th, and by sunrise I was walking forwards alone, watching the sun-floods which streamed down between the fantastic peaks of the mountains. Enormous blocks of red granite lay beside the tracks; and from their crevices the birds flew up into the light. I had been warned not to walk far; and I soon learned why.—Presently after mounting, I was surprised to see, on the left hand face of rock, two tablets smoothed for inscriptions. On one, the inscription had been effaced: the other was covered with Egyptian hieroglyphics.—Bishara came up, and pointed to a wadee before us which diverged from the main route,—Wadee Magara,—and here he evidently wanted us to go. We turned in there: and I will just mention, for the guidance for any future traveller, where

the Egyptian relics are to be looked for. Passing into Wadee Magara from Wadee Gennee, a patch of green shrubs soon appears on the right; and further on, a single thorny-acacia is seen on the same side. Here the traveller must dismount, and climb the steep and difficult mountain side immediately opposite the tree. If he sets out in the angle, he can hardly miss his object. —On the left hand slope are two tablets of hieroglyphics, besides some attempts at excavation which have been discontinued. On the right hand slope of the recess are four more; and further round on the same side, still two more, under the shelter of a projecting ledge:—one might say, in a little cave. Of these two, one is finished; the other only just begun. What can these inscriptions mean,—high up such a wild, retired mountain, and unfinished?

Niebuhr discovered, and after him Laborde and other travellers visited, a group of Egyptian mortuary stones (as is supposed) near Naszeb, on the more northern road which Burckhardt took: and an account of them is given by Laborde.* Of this group Burckhardt says† — "It seems to be a custom prevalent with the Arabs in every part of the desert, to have regular burial-grounds, whither they carry their dead, sometimes from the distance of several days' journey. The burying-ground seen by Niebuhr near Naszeb, which, as I have already mentioned, I passed without visiting, ... appears to have been an ancient cemetery of the same kind, formed at a time when hieroglyphical characters were in use among all the

* Journey through Arabia Petræa, &c., p. 80 (English translation).

† Travels in Syria and the Holy Land, p. 432.

nations under Egyptian influence. As there are no countries where ancient manners are so permanent as in the desert, it is probable that the same customs of sepulture then prevailed which still exist; and that the burial-ground described by Niebuhr by no means proves the former existence of a city."

I wish some one who can read the Egyptian hieroglyphics would go and examine into this matter. Laborde mentions tablets slightly,—the tablets which we saw, and supposes that some attempts to find copper may have been made here, which might attract Egyptian workmen. If such works were ever begun here, they must have been immediately relinquished.

We retraced our steps to the entrance of the wadee, and then, turning to the left, entered upon Wadee Mokatteb,—the Written Valley. I was so busy thinking over what we had just seen, that I forgot to ask the name of this new wadee, or to take heed to what was about me, when a rock turning off to the left caught my eye, and roused me at once. It was covered with inscriptions, from base to summit; —covered as thick as the letters would stand; not only on the smooth parts of the stone, but wherever the characters could be put. I was the last of the troop; and they had certainly all passed by without noticing this rock. I shouted, and waved my courbash to bring them back; they turned, but did not come. They all drew to the side of the wadee; and I presently found that they too had discovered wonderful rocks. For six miles or so now, we passed between rocks inscribed all over with characters which nobody can read.—They are irregularly carved;—some larger,

some smaller, from (I think) nearly a foot high to half an inch. Those of us who had good sight perceived that there were inscriptions much higher up than we had been given to understand by travellers. On many a smooth natural tablet, high up on the face of the mountain, could I see mysterious lines, like those below, when the sunlight or shadow fell favourably: but the unbroken mass of inscriptions was between the base and a height of twenty feet.—Almost every large stone which lay in the valley also bore similar records. Some were rather lightly traced, —little more than scratched,—on the stone: but many were deep cut.

This character was unknown at the time when Justinian built the Convent of Mount Sinai; and it cannot yet be read. At first, the discoverers had a natural hope that these gravings on the rock might prove to be the work of the Hebrews: but that idea has long been given up. From very early ages, the mountains we were now approaching had been sacred places and objects of pilgrimage; and after the Christian Era, many thousands of Christians lived in this peninsular,—some in monasteries, and very many as anchorites, scattered through the valleys and among the rocks about Serbal and Sinai. For some hundreds of years, pilgrims trooped hitherwards; and the learned now suppose the inscriptions in Wadee Mokatteb and other places to record the names and blessings of pilgrims. If so, it is as desirable as ever to find a key to this character, that we may learn what unknown people,—or people who wrote in an unknown character,—shared, in former

days, the Jewish and Christian faith.—In the transactions of the Royal Society a large number, (I think 187) of these inscriptions are published, among which are nine Greek and one Latin: but these do not help us to assign the rest to their origin. Dr. Lepsius conjectures these to be the work of Shepherds: but one does not see why, in that case, they should be found only in the way to sacred localities;—for instance, as far as Rephidim and El Erbayn at the foot of Horeb, and no higher up the Wadee el Ledja.

Among these legends, and in many another spot hereabouts, are drawings on the rock which may well be the work of Bedoueen goat-herds. They are scratches, rather than carvings, of camels, goats and gazelles;—hugely-laden, crooked camels,—tumble-down goats, and most clumsy or scraggy gazelles. They are amusing, but not at all mysterious.

In the afternoon, we found the tufts of desert shrubs becoming thicker and larger; the tamarisks expanded into trees, and in an angle of the valley, unpruned palms showed themselves before us. Bishara and the dragomen began to look about for a resting-place; and they told us we were entering Wadee Feiran. As we turned that angle, we came upon inclosures;—the first we had seen since leaving the Wells of Moses. Thick palm-groves now rose before us; and it was pleasant to ride in among them, past walls and little flocks of goats tended by Arabs, over patches of damp soil, and under the declivities of Mount Serbal. Serbal rose grandly over all; and it let down little streamlets, along whose margin fresh grass ran in

lines beside the tracks.—In one spot, there was seen a fine sweep of the mountain ridge, where it is natural for those who believe this to have been the mountain of the Law to see in vision the gathering of the clouds and the flashing of the lightnings. But there is no plain below from which the Hebrew multitude could have beheld this: nor is there anywhere round the mountain a space which could afford the spectacle to any large number of people.—I shall not enter upon the controversy about the spot of the giving of the Law. I am convinced that there is no evidence which can decide the matter; and that there never can be, because the premises can never be fixed. While every body believes the general fact of the leading of the Hebrews to this region, in order to prepare them for their future nationality, no one can say how much of the details is strictly historical, and how much legendary. The numbers and dates of the narrative are regarded by all the learned, I believe, as untenable; as given, after the Hebrew manner, in the large, and in established terms, understood by Hebrew hearers, but altogether misleading to those who would take them as literally as if they had been assigned after, instead of before, the origin of true history. Learned men, who are up to the mark of historical science in our day, know that the Hebrews and their followers could not have amounted to two millions of people when they left Egypt, and that the "forty years" and "forty days" assigned to a variety of transactions is not to be taken literally, nor was ever meant to be so: and they are aware that it is in vain to fix

upon any particular mountain peak as that from which the Law was given.

It is quite another question which was the sacred mountain in the belief of early times. In regard to this there is abundance of evidence. It is clear that Serbal and Sinai were both sacred mountains, and objects of pilgrimage from a very early age. The traveller cannot but see this on the spot; and if he is further disposed to occupy himself with the speculation which of the mountains of the region was in the mind of the writers of Exodus, he will do as travellers have hitherto done,—fix upon the peak which in his view answers the most nearly to the points of the narrative. Of the few travellers who have been there, the greater number have pointed out some fresh spot which struck their fancy, in the absence of all evidence as to which the writers had in view.—If I were to do this, it would not be Serbal that I should fix upon; because there is, as I said, no space within view of its peaks and ridge whence any large number could fix their gaze on any one suitable point of the mountain. Yet it is clear that, for some reason or other, Serbal was largely resorted to by devotees and pilgrims, and probably through many ages;—as was also Sinai.—Many inscriptions are found on the rocks near the summit of Serbal; and there is a road up to its peak. In Wadee Feiran the rocks are dotted with caves,—the abodes and tombs of ancient anchorites and devotees. What traces of sanctity remain about Sinai, we shall presently see.

We wandered on in the valley for about a mile beyond the spot I mentioned as affording a fine view

of the pinnacles of Serbal; and then we took up our rest in a truly delicious nook. Serbal was almost overhead, and other mountains enclosed us round. On the slope behind us were the remains of the ancient town known to have existed here; and at its base ran a little streamlet in a mossy channel, overhung with tamarisks and palms. Caves yawned in all the precipices round; and soon, when the large moon rose, the whole was like a rich dream,—except for the voices and laughter of a party of our Arabs round a great fire which gleamed upon the high screen of tamarisks which sheltered them from the night breeze.

In the morning I was out in time to see some of the stars go down behind the mountain peaks, and others fade in the dawn. It was so warm here that I put off my cloak while at breakfast in the open air before sunrise. By six o'clock I was walking forwards, wishing to examine some of the caves. Those to which I climbed were mere cells, rude and unshapen; just answering to one's childish notions of an anchorite's cell. Some had as many as four chambers, I was told; but none that I visited had more than two. I observed a seat apparently cut into the rock on the margin of the runnel, where it spreads into a brook; and I wondered who planted it there; for it was too convenient and pleasant to have been done with the good-will of anchorites.—Then I walked through palm-groves, and in and out among inclosures, delighting my eyes with the asphodel which blossomed richly in the crevices of the rocks;—sometimes within reach, so that I had actually bouquets to present to my friends when they overtook me. There is nothing like the words written

down at the time; so here are those of my journal of that date. "Paths through the tamarisks; and Arab tents, and black goats and swathed goat-herds; and the first sunlight dropping in through the mountain clefts,—golden beyond description, and making golden the waving palm tops in the illumined nook I looked down upon. On turning round, I saw our loaded camels coming winding through the tall stems behind me, and their drivers among the trees. How must Feiran (if then like what it is now) have appeared to the Israelites after their wandering in the arid places of the Desert! But it is not fertile, as some authors say, who mean by that that it is cultivated. I saw nothing grown by husbandry; and the soil is sandy as elsewhere. Tender grass and cresses spring in the brook; and there are tufts of herbage and weeds in the rock-clefts: but the palms are unpruned, and all is wild, however sweet.—As we pursued the wadee, the vegetation subsided into the usual Desert tufts; and the way was hot and dry. Our last views of Mount Serbal were very fine as it towered,—all in lilac hues and blue shadows,—above the nearer mountains behind us. Before us were rising all the morning, the peaks of the Sinai nucleus."

It was this which made that Saturday, the 6th of March, a remarkable day to us. On this day, we travelled from Wadee Feiran to Mount Sinai, and at night we rested in the convent.

It must be understood that the whole cluster of mountains before us is called Sinai;—the whole region which rises above the plain. At a considerable elevation, a wide plain spreads, out of which branch many

wadees. From this plain springs a cluster of rocky mountains, at whose base lies the convent of Mount Sinai.—Further,—this cluster, as seen from the plain, is called at this day (however it might be formerly) Horeb: and when the heights of Horeb are attained, other mountains or peaks are seen to spring, which are invisible from below. The two principal peaks are those of Moses, or Sinai Proper, and Saint Catherine. Thus, there are two great ascents to reach the base of Sinai Proper: and the first of these we accomplished this morning. As my journal says—"We followed wadees, crossed low ridges, dipped down into a deep, narrow, tufted valley, drank water from our skins, crossed and emerged, and entered upon the defile which leads to the plain of Sinai. What a rugged and steep ascent it is,—winding always, but never with any terrific depth below! I kept my seat till we reached our lunching-place, in the shadow of rocks, whence we saw the rear of our caravan creeping over the levels below. Then I walked some way, but was soon glad to mount my camel, which seemed well at home in this chaos. The colouring of the rocks was as vivid and striking as at any former point of our journey; and the myrtle green of the shale was relieving to the eye.—We came out at last upon the plain where one would like to think the Hebrews were encamped; a level expanse of sand, tufted with Desert plants; and out of it springs, directly before us, the cluster of peaks which is now called Horeb. On this plain were Arabs and goats; and a long shadow was flung across it, below Horeb, from the western mountain.—Soon, as we speeded over the plain, we came in sight of the convent, lying beautifully in the

deep shadow of Horeb, aslant up the western slope,—and with tall cypresses and some greener trees springing from within its fortress-like walls. It was very beautiful from this distance, — snug in its extremely narrow valley.—We saw to the right, at the base of the mountain, the second garden of the convent, with cypresses and green foliage like the other.—Next, we passed the Arab cemetery, — a crowd of little rude stones.—Then we rode over shelves of rock up to the convent, and past its inclosure walls, which are of various dates and materials, but chiefly of large crude brick, with occasional heavy blocks of stone.—Some travellers' tents were under the walls, and groups of Arab boys were loitering about. The windlass at the place of entrance was at work, and two monks looked down upon us from their terrace on the walls.—Mr. Y. went up by the windlass, after his letter, to present his respects to the Prior. We looked upon his swinging ascent with some wonder what we should do, if the other entrance of which we had heard should be closed against strangers now. But a monk soon invited us within a well-secured postern, and lighted us with his lantern through a dark passage, and then led us through the green and blossomy and terraced garden, and up from one stair-case and platform to another, till we arrived at the strangers' corridor, whence we could overlook much of the curious complication of buildings and spaces which constitute the interior of the convent of Mount Sinai."

CHAPTER IV.

CONVENT OF MOUNT SINAI.—ASCENT OF DJEBEL MOUSA.—ASCENT OF HOREB.

THE first thing known of the settlement of this place and neighbourhood is that the Empress Helena, in the fourth century, built a small church over the spot where the Burning Bush grew. Who there was to tell the Empress where the Bush grew, is not known; nor how the tradition had been preserved for nearly two thousand years. Several small convents were built in the peninsula, after Helena's church began to attract devotees: but the Bedoueens were so dangerous and troublesome that the Christians of the region petitioned Justinian to build them a fortified convent. He sent workmen, Burckhardt tells us,*. from Constantinople and Egypt, with orders to build an impregnable monastery on the top of Djebel Mousa,—that peak being in his day supposed to be the one from which the Law was given. There being no water at that height, the workmen built the convent at the foot of Horeb, inclosing within its walls the well at which it is said Moses was the first to drink.—The monks believe that Justinian gave the whole of the peninsula to their establishment; and that so many sacred buildings and

* Travels in Syria and the Holy Land, p. 545.

hermitages arose in consequence, that six or seven thousand monks and hermits were inhabiting the region at the time of the Mohammedan conquest.

The worship is now solely that of the Greek church: but there was a time when many forms of religion were on an equality here. Beside the great Greek church, stood the Mosque, whence the Muezzin might, within the walls of this Christian convent, call the Faithful to prayer. The Latins, Armenians and Syrians had chapels also: but the Greek is the only one now in use. There were about thirty monks when we were there, some of whom appeared to have suffered from the severity of their rule. They have an establishment at Cairo, which is a resource to them against much want and danger which they must otherwise suffer under. Their corn comes from Cairo; most of the soil for their several gardens comes thence on the backs of camels. These gardens are of great importance to them,—not only because they depend on them for their supply of vegetables, while never touching animal food, and because they propitiate the Bedoueens with fruit, but because their reputation largely depends on the great quantity of medicinal and sacred herbs which they send into the world every season. The gardens are carefully cultivated, terraced, and well irrigated. When we were there, the blossomy almonds and peaches, and the vivid green of the herb beds, among the tall dark cypresses and spreading olives, were a feast to the eye.

Before we went, we called this the Convent of St. Catherine, as everybody does. We had read of it under that name, and seen that name under every

print of the place that had come before our eyes. Our surprise was therefore great when a monk who had taken the vows twenty years before declared that he did not know it by that name. Being asked whether the convent had nothing to do with St. Catherine, he replied, only by the bones of a hermitess, named Catherine, having been found on the mountain above the convent which bears her name. Perplexed by this, I was yet more surprised when I observed a little Catherine-wheel rudely carved over one of the posterns: and a picture of the saint, leaning on her wheel, in the library, with her name at length. In the chapel also her relics lie in state,—those bones which were found on the mountain-top, and were brought hither by the monks a few years after the establishment of the convent. The monk, however, stuck to his declaration that the convent had no connexion with St. Catherine: and we suspected there was some misunderstanding between him and the interpreter, — our dragoman Since my return, however, I have found the solution of our difficulty in Burckhardt,* who seems to elucidate everything he touches. He says:—"M. Seetzen has fallen into a mistake in calling the convent by the name of St. Catherine. It is dedicated to the Transfiguration, or, as the Greeks call it, the Metamorphosis, and not to St. Catherine, whose relics only are preserved here."—We asked the monk what, according to him, the name of the convent was; and he replied, the Convent of Mount Sinai,—saying nothing about the Transfiguration.

There is a large mosaic representation of the Trans-

* Travels in Syria and the Holy Land, p. 553.

figuration in the dome of a chapel; a curious specimen of art to be seen in such a place. But the pride of the brethren is in the chapel of the Burning Bush. We were desired to enter it barefoot: but as I had laced boots on, I ventured to disobey, and passed without remark. Our monk-guide reverently bent under the altar, and removed a silver plate which covers the spot where the Bush grew. The Bush itself, however, flourishes elsewhere, in one of the courts,—a shrub of the Ribes kind, I think, which was sprouting vigorously. The monk, who plucked some twigs for those who would accept them, said with enthusiasm that it had never drooped; "and now," he continued, "that it has flourished for three thousand years, I am sure it will never die."—The library contains a large number of Greek books of monkish devotion, and a few Arabic manuscripts, of which Burckhardt gives some account. I picked up there an odd volume of the "Spectator," left, no doubt, by some traveller. Its title-page and fly-leaf are scribbled over with pious curses by the Rev. Joseph Wolff, who begins his vituperation with "He who left this book in this place merits to be beaten with forty stripes save one," &c. &c.

The monks sell Manna to strangers, in little round boxes, wherein it coagulates to a mass, but melts when exposed to the sun. This substance exudes from the tamarisk in summer, and is most plentiful after the most copious rains. It drops upon the ground from the twigs of the tamarisk, which grows abundantly in the neighbouring wadees. The manna is picked up before sunrise, as it melts afterwards. The Arabs boil and strain it, and keep it in skins, to serve instead of

honey: and very nourishing aliment it is said to be, if used sparingly. Its appearance is not very tempting.

The monks make palm brandy in abundance, and drink it too. The pale-faced and shrunken guide who took us up the mountain could not be induced to eat cold fowl: it would be a sin to touch animal food; but he took a brave pull at the brandy bottle. Such are the differences of morals among Christians!

I think the unfavourable position of the convent must be partly answerable for the pale faces of most of its inhabitants; though poor diet and severe vigils, and apprehensions from the Bedoueens have, no doubt, much to do with it. Mrs. Y. and I had the best room in the convent,—spacious, clean, and with plenty of windows; but I could not sleep; and the sense of oppression, while within the walls, was remarkable. This is not to be wondered at, as a free circulation of air is impossible. The valley is so narrow as to be filled up, within twenty feet or so, by the building, which slopes up the mountain backwards; and the south end is closed in, at a short distance, by a precipitous barrier. It is open only to the north; and how the place can be endured in summer, I cannot conceive. The elevation of the whole region, it is true, is such that the season is more backward than that of Cairo by two months: but this elevation can avail little to an abode placed in an abyss of bare rocks. I was struck with this the first night, when I went out into our corridor, after ten o'clock, to see the moon come up between two peaks,—her light being already bright on the western summits. Still and sweet as was the scene, —the air being hazy with moonlight in this rocky

basin, there was something oppressive in the nearness of the precipices, and I could not but wonder what state of nerve one would be in during summer, and in seasons of storm. The lightning must fill this space like a flood; and the thunder must die hard among the echoes of these steep barriers. As for the thunder, Burckhardt heard a curious tale here. He says:*— "Several Bedoueens had acquainted me that a thundering noise, like repeated charges of heavy artillery, is heard at times in these mountains; and they all affirmed that it came from Om Shomar. The monks corroborated the story, and even positively asserted that they had heard the sound about mid-day, five years ago, describing it in the same manner as the Bedoueens. The same noise had been heard in more remote times, and the Ikonómos, who had lived here forty years, told me that he remembered to have heard the noise at four or five separate periods. I inquired whether any shock of an earthquake had ever been felt on such occasions, but was answered in the negative. Wishing to ascertain the truth, I prepared to visit the mountain of Om Shomar."—He did so, and "could nowhere find the slightest traces of a volcano."

What must the reverberating thunder have been among these precipices to the Hebrews, who had scarcely ever seen a cloud in the sky!

If the monks looked pale-faced to us, we must have presented an extraordinary spectacle to them,—with our faces,—some red, some brown, and our parched and cracked lips. As we looked round upon one another, we saw complexions of all hues between a

* Travels in Syria and the Holy Land, p. 586.

boiled lobster and a mahogany table. It is better so than to annoy one's self with the weight of an umbrella and the stifling of a veil. I threw aside my veil after one or two trials. Its shifting threads are painful to the eyes amidst the glare of the Desert. I was well satisfied with my goggles,—not of glass, which is heating, and might be broken,—but of black woven wire, which admits the air freely, and cannot get spoiled. As for the rest, we wore broad-brimmed hats, and, for the most part, took no further pains, trusting that time would make us look like ourselves again.

The monks have lately built a new set of guest chambers, in which the greater part of our company were lodged. These rooms are made as comfortable as possible, under the circumstances: and there we remained from Saturday afternoon till Wednesday morning. We were waited upon, of course, by our own people; and served, for the most part, with our own utensils and stores; while a monk was at our call, to give us guidance and information. When the time came for settling accounts, the gentlemen concerned with the Prior thought him rapacious,—as former priors have been considered by former travellers; and this, after every regard being paid to his isolated position, and the circumstances of his establishment.—Within the convent, everything is done by the monks themselves, who are educated to their respective offices. A tribe of Arabs are the outdoor servants or serfs of the establishment,—being employed to fetch and carry, bring wood and prepare charcoal, keep the sheep and goats, and spin the wool, &c.: in return for which offices, they are fed according to their need.

On the Sunday morning, some of the gentlemen went to early mass,—at six,—and thought the ceremonial and appurtenances very superb. Our company were free to have their own service in the morning: and we made a quiet day of it, merely going out in the afternoon for a walk in the neighbouring wadees. Some of us studied the outside of the convent and its garden, and went to see the ravine by which we were to ascend the next day to Sinai Proper, or Djebel Mousa. It did not look very formidable; and we were happy to observe that we should have shade on our side of the mountain for nearly the whole time.

By the same hour the next day, I was convinced that, of the many mountains I have climbed, Sinai is the easiest of ascent. I found really no fatigue at all in it. Much of our ease was, no doubt, owing to the deep shade in which our path lay: but something also to the steps which are still available for the greater part of the way. According to tradition, and to all appearance, there was formerly one long staircase from the base of Horeb to the pinnacle of Djebel Mousa; the number of steps being variously reported as from fourteen to fifty thousand. It is the greatest possible help, in ascending a mountain, to be saved all uncertainty of footing. With this advantage, shade, water, and plenty of time, we found the expedition as easy as it was interesting.

Within half an hour we arrived at the well-known spring of ice-cold water, which lay dark in its pool within the rock, fringed with the delicate fern dropping out of every crevice.—The next striking object was the arch spanning the road which marks this as a sacred

journey. The effect is strange, of a portal erected in a ravine,—a sort of leave of access to the mountain top: and the distant views now opening are exceedingly impressive when seen through the arch. Soon after, the guide cried out "Half way," and the least able of us felt that we should all reach the summit.—Next, we arrived at the plain at the top of Horeb;—the plain from which spring the peaks of Moses and of St. Catherine, and some others. In the midst stands, in mournful solitude, a cypress, planted by the monks a hundred years ago: and near it, the poor little chapel of St. Elias. We had already passed the small chapel of Santa Maria. In this plain it was, according to the Kurán, that Moses communicated with God; and we find many Arabic inscriptions here cut on the stones by Mohammedan devotees. In their belief, this is the top of Horeb, and the holiest place. They have a mosque, however, on the summit of Djebel Mousa, a few paces from the Christian church which occupies the highest pinnacle.

We were now about three quarters of an hour from the convent; and there was another half hour's climbing before us. The ascent here became steeper; but it was still easy. Near the summit we saw wider and wilder views than before, through a second arch. At the top, we followed the advice of our guide in resting and refreshing ourselves in the shade of the convent, before looking about us in the glaring sun. I thought I had never seen such sunlight, as it streamed into the dark vaulted chamber, through and over the fine group of Arab boys who filled up the doorway.

What a view it was when we came out! Burckhardt

missed it, through the provoking accident of a thick fog. As for us, we saw everything radiantly that came within the capacity of the eye at all. For a vast distance round, it was one billowy expanse of brown summits, arid beyond description, and unrelieved by any variety of colour, or by any glimpse of valley or plain. This summit is certainly not visible from any plain: and, in regard to that consideration, it is not superior in its claims to Serbal. Serbal rose finely above a nearer ridge. Some of us thought we could discern the sea on that side; but we remained uncertain about it. The other sea line, the Gulf of Akaba, was plain enough, a line of grey between two of sand. To the north, there was the relief of a white ridge above the desolate brown;—hills in the El Tiheh region. The scene was altogether strange and desolate;—most like one's notion of an antecedent age of our globe,—a time before man was created, when deep calling to deep, and thunders responding to thunders, and monsters slow moving in wildernesses, had the world all to themselves. I am thankful to have seen it; for, whether it be one of the historical holy places or not, its singular wildness renders it quite sacred enough.

We found the descent perfectly easy, and had the advantage of a cool breeze, in addition to the shade. We returned quite untired, and lost no time in making our arrangements for an ascent of Horeb, the next day.

In the morning, it appeared that only six of our fourteen would undertake the more laborious work of to-day. Of these six, I was one.—The expedition

proved so much more interesting than even that of yesterday that I was concerned for those who staid behind.

We left the convent at seven,—after breakfast,—skirting the base of Horeb till we came to one of the principal shows of the place,—the stone in which Aaron moulded the head of the golden calf. Burckhardt speaks of it as "the head of the golden calf, transmuted into stone," and continues;* "it is somewhat singular that both the monks and the Bedoueens call it the cow's head (Ras el Bakar), and not the calf's, confounding it perhaps with the 'red heifer' of which the Old Testament and the Kurán speak. It is a stone half buried in the ground, and bears some resemblance to the forehead of a cow. Some travellers have explained this stone to be the mould in which Aaron cast the calf, though it is not hollow but projecting: the Arabs and monks however gravely assured me that it was 'the cow's' head itself."—I do not know what to make of this, unless we suppose Burckhardt's guide to have shown him a different stone from the one pointed out to us, which was hollow;—the hollow being something of the form of a cow's head, and being certainly represented to us as the mould in which the head of the calf was cast.—As to its being called "the cow" by the monks and Arabs, it does not much matter. The Hebrews had seen as much of the cow of Athor as of the bull Apis in Egypt; and tradition might nearly as well assign the one object as the other. The Old Testament however declares it to have been a young bull; and when Aaron presented it to the people as the god

* Travels in Syria and the Holy Land, p. 583.

that brought them out of Egypt, he was more likely to have had the god than the goddess in his mind.

We next passed the fine garden belonging to the convent which I mentioned as being on our right when we first arrived. We did not enter it, but enjoyed in passing the sight of its blossoming fruit-trees. From this time, we saw many inscriptions on the rocks, as we passed up through the narrow wadee called El Ledja. The character is of the same unreadable kind as in Wadee Mokatteb and at Mount Serbal, and proves that scribes of the class that went there had been here also. What their object was,—whether the mountain, or, as many have supposed, merely the rock which Moses struck for water, no one can confidently say. To me it seems improbable that so many should come for the sake of Rephidim merely, in so very early an age,—it must be so clear to even the blindest devotees that this could be no place for striking the rock for water,—natural springs abounding in the whole district. I should be disposed to consider the choice of this stone for a relic of the miracle the device of a comparatively modern monkish age.—This rock was about twice the height of the tallest of our party;—nearly twelve feet. There are marks on it as of a rush of water. To leave such marks, however, the water must have rushed for some hundreds of years; and Burckhardt's opinion is that the chisel was the more probable instrument. Still proceeding along El Ledja, we passed three gardens and a chaos of boulders, and at last sat down in the pleasant olive grove belonging to the small convent of El-Erbayn,—"the Forty,"—so named from the forty martyrs who perished here;—monks or anchorites

slaughtered by the Bedoueens. There are no clear particulars told on the spot: but Dr. Robinson points out * that these forty martyrs were probably the thirty-eight killed, and two mortally wounded, of the hermits who were attacked by the Saracens in the fourth century, when the holy Superior Doulas retired, with a few companions, into a tower on the mountain. The story is that when the Saracens endeavoured to attack the tower, the whole of the summit of the mountain became fiery; on seeing which, the enemy fled, leaving the monks free to come down and bury their dead.

We were invited into this convent by our servants; and we entered it through a little orchard of blossoming trees. Mats were spread for us in the gallery; and there we were served with coffee, palm brandy, and dates preserved in oil,—which some of the party found highly offensive, and others rather liked. This convent and garden are in the charge of the Arab dependents of the Christians; and a few of the monks occasionally live here.—About ten o'clock, we began to climb the mountain. As we were on the opposite side from that which we ascended yesterday, we were, of course, in the sunshine; and blazing and broiling sunshine it was, till we reached the highest ravine. Here was no path, nor any steps like those which had so aided us on the other side of the mountain. It was rough and toilsome climbing till we reached the little plain on which grows the solitary cypress. Then, after descending a little, we ascended a ravine which few travellers have, I believe, attempted, and where women had probably never before

* Biblical Researches, &c., I. 182.

set foot. Dr. Robinson speaks strongly * of the difficulty and danger of the latter part of the ascent, which appears to have been more formidable to him than to us. When we reached our point, we thought no more of our fatigues, nor of our doubts how to get down again. There, besides all, or nearly all, that we saw yesterday, we beheld, stretched below us, the wide plain and its tributary wadees,—a space amply sufficient for the encampment of the Hebrews, be their numbers what they might. "The whole plain," says Dr. Robinson,† "lay spread out beneath our feet, with the adjacent wadees and mountains; while Wadee esh-Sheikh on the right, and the recess on the left, both connected with, and opening broadly from, er-Râhah (the plain) presented an area which serves nearly to double that of the plain. Our conviction was strengthened, that here, or on some one of the adjacent cliffs, was the spot where the Lord 'descended in fire' and proclaimed the Law. Here lay the plain where the whole congregation might be assembled; here was the mount that could be approached and touched, if not forbidden; and here the mountain brow, where alone the lightnings and the thick cloud would be visible, and the thunders and the voice of the trump be heard, when the Lord 'came down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.'"

We chose for our resting-place the shadow of a rock where we sat long, looking abroad upon a scene which fulfilled all our expectations and desires. The spreading plain and its tributaries made the view a far finer one than that from Djebel Mousa. Again Serbal stood out grandly, towering above all the other mountains; and

* Biblical Researches, &c., I. 157. † Ibid. I. 158.

again the eastern Arabian hills were exquisitely beautiful. Immediately below us was a fearful precipice which it was scarcely possible to look down steadily. It was only by being unable to discover the sea that we were aware of being at a lower point than yesterday. One alone of our party ventured up the small remaining distance; and he went without shoes, and supported by two Arabs.

After relating his process of measurement of the plain at the foot of Sinai, Dr. Robinson says:*—"We may therefore fairly estimate the whole plain at two geological miles long, and ranging in breadth from one-third to two-thirds of a mile; or as equivalent to a surface of at least one square mile. This space is nearly doubled by the recess so often mentioned on the west, and by the broad and level area of Wadee Sheikh on the east, which issues at right angles to the plain, and is equally in view of the front and summit of the present Horeb.—The examination of this afternoon convinced us that here was space enough to satisfy all the requisitions of the Scriptural narrative, so far as it relates to the assembling of the congregation to receive the Law. Here, too, one can see the fitness of the injunction, to set bounds around the mount, that neither man nor beast might approach too near. The encampment before the Mount, as has been before suggested, might not improbably include only the head-quarters of Moses and the elders, and of a portion of the people; while the remainder, with their flocks, were scattered among the adjacent valleys."—To us it appeared probable that here, at least, was the place

* Biblical Researches, &c., I. 141.

which the writer or writers of the Book of Exodus had in mind, as the scene of the giving of the Law: and no one on the spot can avoid the conviction that the writer was intimately acquainted with the localities of the Peninsula of Sinai.

The descent from our pinnacle was less difficult than we had expected,—probably from our being exhilarated by what we had seen. In the little plain of the cypress, coffee was brought to us by our dragomen, who were better aware than ourselves of what still lay before us. The guides now led us down by a ravine which descended directly upon the wadee in which the convent stands. This long pass was one continuous series of shattered rocks, so fatiguing to traverse that the strongest of us took shorter and more timorous steps, and more frequent rests, till the trembling of our limbs made us glad to be at last within sight of home. The heat among the rock-shelves of the wadee was excessive: and now having accomplished all our objects in this singular and interesting region, we were not sorry to see encamped behind the convent some of the camels and drivers with whom we were to proceed to-morrow towards the head of the Gulf of Akaba.

CHAPTER V.

MOSES AT MOUNT SINAI.

THE great interest of the Sinai region lies in its unaltered and unalterable character. There it is, feature by feature the same as when those events occurred which make it holy ground. In every other kind of scenery, there is more or less change, from one thousand years to another. The country is differently cleared, or cultivated, or peopled: even the everlasting Nile changes its course. But here, where there is neither clearing, nor cultivation, nor settled people, where it seems as if volcanic action only could make new features in the scene, and where volcanic action does not seem probable, there is no impediment to one's seeing Sinai as it was when Moses there halted his people. And I did so see Sinai, during the memorable Sunday we spent there. Turning my back on the convent, and forgetting the wretched superstitions of the monks, I looked abroad that day with the eyes of a disciple of Moses, who had followed his footsteps from Memphis hither; and I saw more than by many years' reading of the Pentateuch at home. How differently the Pentateuch here reads, from the same worn old bible which one has handled for five-and-twenty years, I could not have imagined. The light from Egypt and

Arabia shining into it illuminates unthought-of places, and gives a new and most fresh colouring to the whole. I little thought ever to have seen so much of Moses as I did this day, within sight of Arab tents, like those in which he and Zipporah and their children lived when first here with Jethro's flocks; within sight of the same peaks which were landmarks to the wandering tribes; and of the same wadees where they rested, and surrounded by the very same mountain springs whence they brought water for themselves and their flocks. The wells within the convent seem to have been always inexhaustible: yet I dare say some of the Hebrew women and children discovered the ice-cold spring behind, which has no doubt lain in its shadowy nook since Horeb was upreared. I wonder whether it was fringed with ferns when the Hebrew women saw it, as it is now. It was a tempting place for gossip,—for sitting down in the shade to talk over the comforts of Goshen, and the verdure of Egypt, and pointing out the dreariness of this place, and reminding one another how unwilling they and their husbands had been to leave Egypt, foreseeing that they should only get into trouble by trying a new country.* In yonder plain was the crowd of dark, low tents, with no tabernacle yet in the midst. Among the neighbouring wadees were the herdsmen dispersed, tending their flocks every day of the week; for as yet there was no Sabbath. This, and very much more did I see on that Sunday at Sinai: much that I could not have seen if I had been a contemporary disciple of Moses;—much that can be

* Exodus XIV. 12.—"Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians?"

seen only by the light of an after age, of the educational purposes and processes for which the Hebrews were brought here.

Here, in some nook which had been his haunt while watching his flocks, sat Moses in those days, overlooking the flock which he was now to lead as the Shepherd of Men. How intense must have been his sense of solitude here! No longer learning, in congenial companionship, "all the wisdom of the Egyptians," but alone,—he the only wise and the only earnest man among a multitude who had no wisdom and no virtue; —he, a man of fine organisation, of gentle rearing, of timid nature, "looking before and after," and overwhelmed with what he saw,—how could he sustain himself under his charge? Without irreverence, we may attribute to him the sustaining thought which was uttered by one long after him; "the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee." Retired into the mountain to pray, he saw beneath him,—not the gleaming lake, on whose shores were those whom he was to make "fishers of men;" not fields "white unto the harvest," but only parched wilds thronged with people from whom he could choose none to help him and carry out his work. That land of the lake and ripening fields lay, not beneath him, but far away in the future,—seen only in faith, and never to be entered by him: his supports must therefore be from faith and benevolence;—from his trust in God and his love to his brethren: and we may hope and believe that amidst his anxieties and tremblings, his doubts of himself and his shame for the people under his charge, these were enough. We may trust that he had his hours of

comfort and high hope in his mountain retirements. It is impossible to avoid endeavouring to enter into his mind, when on the spot of his meditations. We cannot help "looking before and after," from his point of view, by the light which he himself has given us,—the glory which shines from his face even upon our time, brightened as it is by that greater light which afterwards arose "to enlighten the gentiles, and glorify the people Israel."

By his priestly rank and privileges, Moses knew the Mysteries of Egyptian worship. He was the only one of the multitude at Sinai who knew, what we all know, or may know, now,—that the two chief objects of all the heathen Mysteries were the preservation of the doctrine of the Divine Unity, and the detection or explanation of Idolatry. The Orphic Hymn,* sung by the initiated in Mysteries which were derived from Egypt, was familiar truth to him:—"I will declare a secret to the initiated; but let the doors be shut against the profane. . . . I shall utter the truth without disguise. Suffer not therefore thy former prejudices to debar thee from that happy life which the knowledge of these sublime truths will procure unto thee: but carefully contemplate this divine oracle, and preserve it in purity of mind and heart. Go on, in the right way, and contemplate the Sole Governor of the world. He is One, and of Himself Alone: and to that One all things owe their being. He operates through all, was never seen by mortal eyes, but does Himself see every one." Moses knew that this sublime truth

* Quoted by Clemens Alexandrinus and Eusebius.—See "Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses," I. 232.

of the Mysteries was once the common faith of men, though it was now called Atheism, from the contempt it was supposed to cast upon the popular gods; and that it must again become the faith of mankind, through him, amidst all the difficulty and suffering which attend a return from error to a fundamental primitive idea. He knew that before he could see his hope fulfilled,—his hope that every Hebrew would worship Jehovah as his father Abraham had done,—the people must go through a process of training as painful to himself as irksome to them. But this was the work he had to do; and he had brought them hither to begin it.

"With regard to the other part of the SECRET" (of the Mysteries) says Bishop Warburton,* "the *doctrine of the* UNITY, Clemens Alexandrinus informs us that the Egyptian mystagogues taught it amongst their *greater secrets.* 'The Egyptians' says he, 'did not use to reveal their mysteries indiscriminately to all, nor expose their truths concerning their gods to the profane, but to those only who were to succeed to the administration of the State: and to such of the priests as were most approved by their education, learning, and quality.'"

It was the glory of Moses that he saw how such a truth concerned all the children of men: how this was a matter in which those were the truly profane who monopolised the truth, and dishonoured God by hiding him from the minds and hearts of mankind at large; and not those outside who could not pay homage to a God of whom they had never heard. His

* Divine Legation of Moses, I. 223.

was the enterprise of laying open the Mysteries to all, and of making of the Hebrews a high-caste nation. It could not be done any where but in the Desert. The isolation of the Desert was required quite as much for the safety of the announcement as for the training of the people in their purified faith. In Egypt, or any other heathen country, the doctrine of Moses would have excited horror, as the Atheism* of those days; and he would himself have been torn to pieces as that greatest of criminals, a revealer of the Mysteries. He came into the desert to do the daring Deed: and how the results were estimated in the future days of his nation, Josephus shows us in a passage of his Reply to Apion which is singularly interesting to us here. This citizen of a high-caste nation tells Apion that the highest and sublimest knowledge held by a few of the gentiles, and enjoyed only on the rare occasions of their Mysteries, was the daily privilege of the whole Hebrew people. He says† "Can any government be more holy than this? or any religion better adapted to the nature of the Deity? Where, in any place but this, are the whole people, by the special diligence of the priests, to whom the care of public instruction is committed, accurately taught the principles of true piety? So that the body politic seems, as it were, one great *assembly*, constantly kept together, for the celebration of some sacred *mysteries*. For those things

* It is instructive to see what the "Atheism" of Epicurus was, in that saying of his which Lord Bacon declares (Essay 16, "of Atheism") that it is worthy of Plato: "Non deos vulgi negare profanum; sed vulgi opiniones diis applicare profanum."

† Cont. Ap. lib. II. cap. 22. Quoted by Warburton, Divine Leg. I. 225.

which the gentiles keep up for a few days only, that is, during those solemnities they call MYSTERIES and INITIATIONS, we, with vast delight, and a plenitude of knowledge which admits of no error, fully enjoy, and perpetually contemplate through the whole course of our lives. If you ask the nature of those things which in our sacred rites are enjoined and forbidden, I answer, they are simple, and easily understood. The first instruction relates to the DEITY, and teaches that GOD CONTAINS ALL THINGS, and is a Being every way perfect and happy; that he is self-existent, and the SOLE CAUSE of all existence; the Beginning, Middle, and End of all things," &c.

The Supreme, as made known in the heathen Mysteries, exercised no immediate government over men; and in order to give them any idea of a divine government, national and subordinate gods were presented to them, who must, of course, be named. Much superstition in Egypt was connected with the names of the gods; and the Hebrews could not, as the history shows us, recognise a protecting god, who was declared to them as a patriarchal, and was henceforth to be a national God, but through a Name. The first request recorded to be made by Moses was to be commissioned to declare a Name to the people: an incident which shows how completely they had lost the knowledge of One God, and how thoroughly polytheistic were their religious ideas.* And these were the people whom he

* As Lord Bacon observes, "The Indians of the west have names for their particular gods, though they have no name for God: as if the heathens should have had the names Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, &c., but not the word *Deus*; which shows, that even those barbarous people have the notion, though they have not the latitude and extent of it."—*Essay 16th. Of Atheism.*

had to bring into a clear moral relation with one divine Ruler, under such definite sanctions as should keep their minds from going astray among various objects of worship! No wonder it was long,—many generations,—before they conceived of Jehovah as more than a National God. He was the God of their fathers, and their own: better and stronger than the gods of other nations,—and even their over-ruler: but still, the God of none but the Hebrews:—the benefactor of the children of Abraham, but the enemy of the Egyptians and the Canaanites.

In this last belief, it is clear that they were not contradicted or discouraged. In establishing a clear moral relation between them and One Divine Ruler, it was necessary to keep them out of the way of danger from the two most populous and civilised countries in the world,—Egypt and Canaan. Here they were withdrawn into the Desert which lay between the abstract polytheism of the Egyptians and the elementary worship of the Canaanites: but their minds were full of the remembrance of the one; and they must soon (as Moses then supposed) come into the sight of the other. Besides attaching them to their God, it was evidently thought needful by him that they should consider their God to be the enemy of their enemies, in the land they had left and that to which they were going. And thus was Jehovah the God of the Hebrews alone for so long a time that it is difficult to learn from the history when the Jewish nation even began to be prepared for the nobler theological views presented by Christ. Low, in the comparison, as the ancient conception appears, we need only place ourselves back in the time of the

Exodus to see how new and how mighty was the idea of the Supreme being a tutelary god. As we all know, it was too new and too mighty for the Hebrew mind of the time.

As for the form which the relation between Jehovah and his people was to take, that was in entire agreement with the training of the mind of Moses, and the conceptions and needs of the people. The only form in which a divine government could be recognised in those days, in Egypt or elsewhere, was that of a theocracy. The individual called King, in Egypt and elsewhere, was a priest; a vicegerent of the local god. But while these kings ruled in the name of the gods, and had the advantage of their authority, they appropriated to themselves the honours and privileges of royalty, and eclipsed to the people any sacred light which might have visited them from a direct relation with any thing divine. The noble, venerable, inestimable distinction between the Mosaic plan and that of any other theocracy was that here no such intervention was permitted. There was no man here to whom they were to bow the knee, and who was to tower between them and the light of their life. Instead of a crowned priest, in royal chariot, riding over the people's necks to attend Mysteries in which he was to enjoy what they would never know, here was the meek magnanimous Moses standing barefoot and plainly clad, pointing the gaze of the people to the mountain top or to the sky, undergoing instead of enjoying power, and having nothing to ask of Jehovah or of his brethren but that He should be their God, and they should be His people. According to all that Moses had ever seen, learned, or thought,

he must unite in himself the offices of legislator and interpreter of the Divine Will. The lawgiver and priest were one in every country he had known or heard of: and he must be so now. But never before was there a Vicegerent of an Unseen Power so meek; and never a lawgiver so disinterested. We never think of him as the Pharaoh he might so easily have been;—more easily than he could be what he was. We think of him as one of the quietest men whose names have come down to our day; a man struggling under a burden of duty and destiny which he found too heavy for him, and from which he would fain have shrunk, to hide himself again in the moist nooks of the Desert, with his sheep about him, and ruminate once more over "all the wisdom of the Egyptians." Yet, as he did not quit his work, and as he did achieve an enterprise which will affect the destinies of mankind to the end of time, we may be assured that he had the support of that privileged thought,—"the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee."

It appears as if there had been an intention and a hope of training the Hebrews to a state of knowledge and obedience by moral instruction, and a plan of pure and simple worship;—the obedience of Abraham, and the simplicity of his worship in the door of his tent being perhaps the example and the aspiration which Moses had before him when he brought forth the Hebrews from Egypt. Warburton and others are of opinion that the ritual scheme was adopted after the affair of the golden calf, which showed the people to be more incapable of a pure religion and direct communion than could have been supposed. A comparison of

the two sets of Commandments seems to countenance this view. The first set,* though falling below the inculcation of personal righteousness, yet are of a much higher character than the second. They aim at a good degree of social order, for the age in which they were given, and contain nothing ritual except the precept about the Sabbath. This is the set brought down by Moses when he found the people feasting about the golden calf, and which he broke and threw from him. The second Ten,† which remained permanent, are such as may well be believed to have accompanied the ritual system now supposed to have been instituted. They are all ritual except the first two: these two merely forbidding all covenanting with heathens, and making of molten gods. The whole set contains no directions for personal or social conduct. The fact certainly conveys the impression that a more advanced system of Moral Government was withdrawn for the time, and replaced by one less advanced, in proportion to the disappointment caused by the lapse of the degraded people. The Jewish writers, for the most part, lay the blame of this lapse on the influence of the Egyptian mob, "the mixed multitude" who followed in the train of the Hebrews: ‡ but it does not save their credit at all to suppose them more easily influenced by such comrades than by Moses and the ideas he had communicated. However this may be, a ritual religion they were now to have: and in this ritual, they must have their Moral Government. Moses had been compelled to surrender his loftiest

* Exodus, XX. 3—18. † Exodus, XXXIV. 12—27.

‡ Kitto's History of Palestine, p. 200 (note).

aim and hope,—that of raising the people above a ceremonial worship. His object henceforth plainly was to elevate the ceremonial worship into as good a moral government as its nature would permit.

In the great concern of all,—that of the Sanctions of the Moral Law which he gave, Moses made his third marked departure from the religion of Egypt. The first was his laying open the Mysteries: the second, his declaring the Supreme a tutelary god: and the third was his offering, as the Sanction of the Moral Law, Temporal Retribution instead of Future Reward and Punishment.

Under every religious system, the excruciating difficulty has been the Existence of Evil. Individuals may reconcile themselves to the fact; and so many have succeeded in doing so, that the history of philosophy is full of the apologies of sages for the existence of Evil. But, as a philosophical question, the difficulty has never been touched; and philosophy has not yet discovered how it ever can be. The learning of Moses taught him exactly what the deepest learning teaches the wisest men now,—the mischievous operation of this difficulty upon all religious systems that the world had known. He was aware that the most pernicious of all the discrepancies between the Mysteries and the popular knowledge lay in the respective views of the Initiated and the people about a future life. While the priests, unable to account for the inequalities of Providence in this life, taught that reward and punishment would restore the balance in the next, all philosophers whatever, (Cicero tells us) held in common that God could not be angry; and that he could not hurt any one:

that anger and favour are equally impossible to a happy and immortal Nature; and that therefore Fear can have no place in the mind of man in regard to God.—What a state of things was here! As Plutarch says, You may examine the globe; and in no region where Man has lived will you find "a city without the knowledge of a god, or the practice of religion: without the use of vows, oaths, oracles, and sacrifices to procure good, or of deprecatory rites to avert evil:" and elsewhere again, he declares it to be so ancient an opinion that good men should be recompensed after death, that he could not reach either to the author or origin of it. Such was the escape for the multitude from the difficulty of the unequal distribution of pain and pleasure among men: and while the multitude received this on their authority, the Initiated were agreed that God was so free from affections and passions of every kind that he neither conferred good nor inflicted evil on individuals, at any time.—Warburton tells us, in the following passage, of a late result of this discrepancy which shows us how the case must have appeared to one so learned and sagacious as Moses.

"Lactantius, from a forensic lawyer, now become an advocate for Christianity, found nothing so much hindered its reception with the learned as the doctrine of a Future Judgment; which their universal principle, *that God could not be angry*, directly opposed. To strike at the root of this evil, he composed a discourse which Jerome calls *pulcherrimum opus*, entitled DE IRÂ DEI: for he had observed, he tells us, that this principle was now much spread among the common people: he lays the blame of it upon the philosophers; and tells

us, as Tully had done before, that all the philosophers agreed to exclude the passion of anger from the Godhead."*—The ground taken by Lactantius was that if God could not be angry, all religion was done away with, as a future state of retribution was thus excluded: he therefore contended that the God of the Christians was actuated, as man is, by love and hatred; only that they are always reasonable in Him: and he then proceeded to argue for God having a human form, as a necessary consequence of his sharing human passions. Into this we need not go. The important part of this citation is the testimony that the doctrine of a future Judgment was the obstacle to the reception of Christianity by the learned; and why.

Moses saw thus that the doctrine of future reward and punishment was disbelieved by the learned, and was so far made a deception to the people as that the inevitable suffering which arises from sin, and the peace which attends goodness, were concealed from them under the disguise of arbitrary punishment and reward. The Initiated appear to have believed in a future life, and in the natural retribution by which, from their very constitution, the virtuous enjoy and the vicious suffer: but, in as far as they declared these things in the form of divine promises and threats, contingent on future conduct, they deceived the people: and Moses as carefully avoided perpetrating this evil as any other connected with the Mysteries.

The second ordinary way of meeting the difficulty of the existence of evil was no less familiar to him, from his position through life;—the supposition of two opposing

* Divine Legation, &c. I. 497.

deities. He had seen in Egypt how from being brothers, children of one father, Osiris and Typho, Good and Evil, had become foes; and he had witnessed the moral mischief which arises from the belief of a malevolent spiritual being. We find therefore in the Mosaic system no more trace of an evil spiritual being, hostile to God and man, than of a future life of reward and punishment. The serpent in Eden is, in the history, a mere serpent, altogether Egyptian in its conception, and bearing no relation whatever to the Evil Being with which superstition afterwards connected it. Moses no where hints at such a notion as that of an express Author of Evil. On the contrary his doctrine, consistent from end to end of his teachings, is that which Isaiah expressed afterwards in the plain words :* "I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil. I the Lord do all these things."

As for the remaining method of attempting to account for the existence of Evil,—the allowing a separate and opposing operation to the high qualities of the Supreme, —Moses had seen enough of the consequences of deifying the divine attributes to avoid all the unphilosophical methods in use elsewhere of setting up a rivalship between Holiness and Compassion, between Justice and Mercy. He avoided this practice as the immediate origin of polytheism. The God of the Hebrews, as declared by him, was presented under the simple aspect of a Being in whom all power and all will were concentred; the sole Ruler, who chose and governed this people by his simple and all-venerable Will.

* Isaiah, XLV. 6, 7.

As for what Moses believed about the destiny of man after death, that is a question apart from what he taught to the people,—apart from that of the Sanctions of the Law which he offered. He probably held the doctrine of his caste in Egypt,—that the soul or life was an emanation from the Supreme, to be absorbed after death, and lose its separate existence. From the few and indistinct traces which remain in the Hebrew scriptures of a traditional belief of some kind of futurity for man, it is probable that he thus held this doctrine of the Mysteries. But that he saw this doctrine to be as unpractical as every one sees it to be, is clear from the whole tenour of his life, conduct and doctrine. His sublime object of laying open the Mysteries to his whole people, his noble earnestness and unquestionable simplicity and sincerity prove, as strongly as act can prove thought, that he held no practical religious belief that he did not impart.

The Sanction that he did present, we all know:—Temporal Reward and Punishment. A more plain and practical doctrine was never presented to the mind of man than this of Moses;—that every act of obedience to the Will of Jehovah should be rewarded by happiness in this life, and every act of disobedience punished by unhappiness. The happiness and unhappiness were to be substantial, generally immediate, and visible to the eyes of all men.—Generally immediate; but not always. Jehovah was long-suffering, and might delay retribution: but the evil would be suffered by the children, down to distant generations, if the sinner himself appeared to escape it. Not only was this procrastination of punishment indicated by the fact of an

unequal providence from day to day; but it afforded a hold upon a class of sinners who could not be otherwise wrought upon;—the fearless and hardy, who would brave consequences for themselves, but whose parental affections would bear an appeal; or, at worst, their family pride;—a strong passion among the Hebrews. In this declaration of procrastination of punishment, we see also the first opening of that doctrine which has since become so prominent in the religious life of man,—the doctrine of Repentance. Of this great doctrine, which has perhaps more than any other influenced the spiritual life of mankind, the religion of Moses appears to have opened the first suggestion.

As his doctrine necessarily supposes an equal Providence in this life, the question unavoidably arises whether Moses believed it in its simplicity; and if so, how he could believe it in the face of the facts which daily met his eyes. This great point of contrariety between the Mosaic and the Christian systems is usually considered the most perplexing that occurs. It was beautifully said by both Lord Bacon and Pascal (by which first I cannot discover,—they being contemporaries) that "Prosperity was the promise of the Old Testament: Adversity of the New." This is most true and beautiful: a saying worthy of meditative Christians. It impels us to consider whether Moses could have simply and undeviatingly believed that every Hebrew was happy or unhappy according to his deserts. Here, in this Desert, did he see no person sick whom he could not believe to be guilty? Did he not see infants languishing with thirst? Did he not see bold and

irreligious men appropriating comforts to themselves, to the injury of the gentle and obedient? How this doctrine subsequently acted on the minds of the Hebrews, in the interpretation of the ways of God to man, we see everywhere, from the Books of Chronicles which, in recording any misfortune happening to any body, always suppose or invent (as we see by a comparison with the parallel passages in Kings) a prior sin as the cause, up to the case of him concerning whom the disciples asked Jesus, "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" The question is whether Moses, offering a sanction which required and supposed an equal Providence, simply held that the fact was so, without any doctrine of compensation whatever. Judging by the evidences we have everywhere else of his earnestness and openness, I cannot but believe that he did. And this, not by such considerations as Christians have the benefit of; considerations of the interior peace which attends well-doing, and of the insignificance of the outward fortunes in comparison with the welfare of the mind, so that the whole world is no equivalent for the soul; but in a simple faith that Jehovah would and did deal with his people,—with every man, woman and child of them,—according to their deserts, manifesting his retribution in their outward fortunes. In this view, it does not matter whether the obedience required was ritual or spiritual obedience. When there was no water, the multitude thirsted alike,—those who were too young to sin under the law, as well as the mature; and before the time when children could suffer for their parents' sin, as well as after.—Whatever was the inner convic-

tion of Moses, such was the Sanction offered by him; in avoidance at once of the popular heathen doctrine of future reward and punishment, and of the polytheistic belief of an Evil Spirit contravening the goodness of God.

The reward and punishment being individually experienced, as all enjoyment and suffering must be, had the law the individual for its object, or the public good? About this there can be no question. The relation here was of King and people, leaving for Christianity the nobler and dearer relation of Father and Child. Virtue here was, not rectitude, but obedience. Sin was, not corrupt thought, but failure of allegiance to the Divine King. The Commandments, therefore,—even the first ten, which are moral and not merely ritual like the second, relate only to political or social virtue, leaving it to Christianity to work out the nobler object of personal holiness. Such degree of self-government as is necessary for social virtue is of course supposed and required; but merely such as is indispensable for the good of society and the honour of its Divine Ruler, and not that thorough interior purification and discipline which Christianity offers to every man with no political view, but for his own sake. Our own Hooker seems to have described the scope of the first and higher set of Commandments, when he says,* "A politic use of religion there is. Men fearing God are thereby a good deal more effectually than by positive laws restrained from doing evil; inasmuch as these laws have no further power than over our outward actions only; whereas unto men's inward cogitations,

* Ecclesiastical Polity, Book V. sec. 2.

unto the privy intents and motions of their hearts, religion serveth for a bridle. What more savage, wild and cruel than Man, if he see himself able, either by fraud to overreach, or by power to overbear, the laws whereunto he should be subject? Wherefore in so great boldness to offend, it behoveth that the world should be held in awe, not by a vain surmise, but a true apprehension of somewhat, which no man may think himself able to withstand. This is the Politic Use of Religion."

Even this politic use was found to be of too high a character for the Hebrews as yet. When Moses came down from the Mount with the tables of the Moral Law in his hands,—came down perhaps by some one of the rocky chasms which I was exploring this Sunday at Sinai,—and looked towards the plain which I gazed on this day, he saw, not a people awaiting in awe the pleasure of their Divine King, but a crowd rejoicing in having possessed themselves of a god who would protect them back to Egypt;—back to the sweet Nile waters, and the merry feasts of idols. Instead of the cheerful response he looked for, as before, "and all the people answered together, and said 'All that the Lord hath spoken we will do,'" he heard the sound of shouts and singing as the people danced about their golden Apis. Then Moses not only destroyed the idol, but the tables of the Law;—"brake them beneath the Mount;" and after a long and terrible conflict, surrendered his highest hopes for the people, and pursued a lower aim.—He gave them a ritual, Egyptian in its forms and seasons and associations, but with Jehovah alone for its object. The multitude were in fact incapable of receiving a

faith without forms, as children are incapable of receiving abstract ideas but by means of illustrations: and they would have gone back to Egypt on the first disappointment or pretence, if Moses had not brought as much of Egypt as he could into the Desert to them.—He had all the requisite knowledge of Egyptian worship and ways. He had at his command, among the "mixed multitude," Egyptian artificers; besides that many of the Hebrews themselves were no doubt skilled artisans. So he treated them as they compelled him to do. He offered them a new set of Commandments, eight out of ten of which were about feasts and offerings, and sacrifices and holy days. He fixed upon the days of Egyptian feasts, knowing that the people would at all events observe the days of New Moon, First-fruits, &c., and securing this observance for Jehovah by special ordinance. He set them to work upon a tabernacle,—a moveable temple for the Desert, as nearly as possible resembling an Egyptian temple. He made them an ark,—exactly like what the traveller in Egypt sees sculptured in the processions of the priests, on the walls of palaces and temples finished before Abraham was born.—He permitted to them an oracle, the Urim and Thummim, derived immediately from an Egyptian model. And, most mournful to him of all, he had to give them a priesthood, like that which they had been accustomed to look up to as sacred. He had hoped to make of them a high-caste nation, and had delivered to them the announcement "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation." * But they could not yet take that rank: they were not adequate to that privilege;

* Exodus, XIX. 6.

they preferred deputing their honours to a class, and withdrawing themselves behind this class from communion with Jehovah, and from the light of his countenance.—It had become impossible for them to take up the patriarchal faith where their fathers had lost it: and the Egyptian element which could not yet be dislodged, required large accommodation. It is very interesting to read the account which their own pious descendant, Maimonides, gives * of this crisis in the life of his race.

"As at that time the universal practice, and the mode of worship in which all were educated was, that various kinds of animals should be offered in the temples in which their idols were placed, and before whom their worshippers were to prostrate themselves and to burn incense; and as there were also certain persons set apart for the service of these temples, therefore the Divine wisdom and Providence of God, which so eminently shines forth in all his creatures, did not ordain the abandonment or abolition of all such worship. For it is the well-known disposition of the human heart to cleave to that to which it has been habituated; even in things to which it is not naturally inclined. To have decreed the entire abolition of all such worship would, therefore, have been the same as if a prophet should come and say, 'It is the command of God, that in the day of trouble ye shall not pray, nor fast, nor publicly seek him; but your worship shall be purely mental,' and shall consist in meditation, not in action.' On these accounts the Creator retained those modes of worship, but transferred the veneration from created

* Cited by Kitto in History of Palestine, p. 226.

things and shadows to his own NAME, and commanded us to direct our religious services to himself." The learned disciple of Moses then goes on to give instances. To the traveller in Egypt, the most cursory glance at the Jewish law will show the identity of the religious customs and manners of the two peoples; and the deepest research will only confirm his conviction that the forms of their religious life were substantially the same; the object being changed, and some needful reforms introduced.

When Moses had failed to satisfy the people that Jehovah should have no meaner temple than that of the heavens and the earth, and when it therefore became necessary to prepare for him a visible abiding place, there could be no doubt about what kind of temple it must be. The Hebrews were living, like the Egyptians, under a theocracy; and the temples of Egypt, palaces for the Divine King, must be the model. "The Israelites," says Dr. Kitto,* "were taught to feel that the tabernacle was not only the temple of JEHOVAH, but the palace of their KING; that the table supplied with wine and shew-bread was the royal table; that the altar was the place where the provisions of the monarch were prepared; that the priests were the royal servants, and were bound to attend not only to sacred but also to secular affairs, and were to receive, as their reward, the first tithes, which the people, as subjects, were led to consider as part of the revenue which was due to God, their immediate sovereign. Other things, of a less prominent and important nature, had reference to the same great end."

* History of Palestine, p. 227.

This is not the place for going into any elaborate comparison of the Hebrew and Egyptian religious ritual,—interesting as the subject is to those who have followed the traces of the Israelites from the Nile to Sinai. Besides that the subject may be found fully treated in the writings of heathens, Jews, and Christians, it belongs less to the locality of Sinai than to that of Palestine, as there is no saying how little or how much of the ritual was ordained at first, and what grew up afterwards. As the learned have now made it clear that the Books of the Law were certainly not all written in their present form, for some centuries afterwards, we cannot tell how deep was the first descent into a ceremonial religion at Sinai, and how much was the work of a strengthening priesthood in after years. Some few particulars, however, stand out clear, as original, and relating to the times of the abode at Sinai. —Among these is the setting up of the Tabernacle.

There is no reason to suppose that the Tabernacle was the first portable sanctuary ever made. The eastern idolaters of the old world used to carry about with them the shrines of their idols in their wanderings: and the prophet Amos* and the apostle Stephen† charge the Israelites with having done even this. Travellers tell us that at this day the eastern Tartars carry about a Tabernacle, which they set up for purposes of worship, and take to pieces again when they migrate. This is probably as old as any other nomade custom. Except in its portableness, the tabernacle of the Hebrews was as like as it could be made to an Egyptian temple. It had its circuit wall, represented by a

* Amos, V. 26. † Acts, VII. 43.

curtained enclosure: it had its open court; and then the edifice itself, in the form of an oblong square. It had the two chambers which are the indispensable parts of all Egyptian temples,—the Holy Place; and within this, and very small, the Holy of Holies. The coverings which formed the ceiling and walls of these chambers were embroidered with figures of cherubim, as the ceilings and walls of Egyptian temples had sculptures and paintings of heavenlycreatures. If we may take the description in the 1st chapter of Ezekiel as the Hebrew idea of cherubim, nothing can be more like the lion-headed, hawk-headed, ox-headed, winged images in the Egyptian sculptures. As in Egypt, the wood-work of the sanctuary was of the acacia (shittim wood) which grows abundantly in the wadees about Sinai, as about the shores of the Nile; and the overlaying of this wood with gold was an old Pharaonic practice. It is probable that much of the preparation was done by the hands of Egyptian artisans who migrated with the Hebrews.

In the oldest Egyptian temples, before Abraham was born, the purposes and rites of the inner temple chambers were the same as in the Tabernacle at Sinai, and in the Jerusalem Temple, up to the day when its priests fled before the soldiers of Titus. Throughout all these ages, the Holy of Holies was in the highest sense a sanctuary. No one entered it but the most privileged of the priests, and it contained nothing but the symbol of the presence of the god. In the Egyptian temples, this symbol was the shrine; a chest or closet, containing a sacred pledge, and surmounted by an idol form on its lid or top; that idol form being often guarded by winged creatures, two of the wings

stretching upwards, and two covering their bodies,—as Ezekiel describes. The guardian hawk and ibis, and the wings of Isis Protectrix precisely resemble this description; and indeed the ark of the Hebrews is exactly the Egyptian shrine, with the omission of the idol figure in the Mercy-seat. When carried by poles on the shoulders of priests, habited much like those of Egypt, trumpeters leading and following the procession, with their rams' horns at their mouths, as on occasion of the summons of Jericho, nothing can be imagined more like the sculpture on the walls at Medeenet Haboo, where the shrine, priests and trumpeters make a part of the coronation procession.

The Sacrifices offer more points of resemblance than perhaps any other part of the institutions of Moses. The oblations or gifts were the same, and the libations. The Hebrews brought cakes, meal, wafers and wine, turtle-doves and young pigeons, exactly as we see that Egyptians brought them in days when no Hebrew had yet entered the Nile Valley. Swine were abhorred by the Egyptians as the tenements of evil spirits, from the earliest days.—The practice of the sacrificer laying his hands on the head of the victim, and confessing his sins, thus charging the head with imprecations, is precisely what Herodotus relates* as the Egyptian practice; and so is the immolation of the red heifer. If the Egyptian animal was not entirely red, if a single black or white hair was found upon it, it was rejected, because Apis was black, and Typho red.† The Hebrew sacrifice was to be "a red heifer, without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke."‡

* Herod. II. 39. † Larcher's note on Herod. II. 39.
‡ Numbers, XIX. 2.

"In the Thebaid," says Sir G. Wilkinson, "the sheep was considered not merely as an emblem, but as the most sacred of all animals."—"Strabo, Clemens, and many other writers, notice the sacred character of the sheep; and the two former state that it was looked upon with the same veneration in the Saïte nome as in the neighbourhood of Thebes."* And such resemblances are found throughout the whole institution. The great point of difference is the precautionary arrangement of Moses that the Hebrews should have but one temple, and one great altar of sacrifice: an ordinance which was afterwards broken through, with consequences fatal to the singleness of Hebrew worship.

One particular of the Mosaic practices stands out above most others in curiosity and importance. Magical arts and divination were forbidden to the Hebrews, for a reason which is obvious enough. These were connected,—perhaps scientifically and truly, certainly in the popular mind,—with astrology; and the permission of them would have led directly to the planetary worship which was, above every thing, to be dreaded in the approach of the Hebrews to Canaan, where that worship prevailed. But one exception was permitted. The High-priest, and he alone, was to have recourse to an Oracle, and to be the interpreter of it. He was to ascertain the Divine pleasure by consulting his breast-plate;—the Oracle of the Urim and Thummim. As we all know, this was the Sacred Oracle of the Hebrews for many centuries. The Scriptures cite it up to the time of David. The words Urim and Thummim mean "Light and Truth," or

* Ancient Egyptians, V. 191, 192.

"Justice:" and the article itself is called the "breastplate of Judgment." Now, the goddess of Truth or Justice in Egypt was Thmei: and an Egyptian judge wore,* suspended round his neck by a gold chain, a figure of this goddess, studded with precious stones: and his way of pronouncing his decision was by touching the successful applicant with this figure. Moreover, Sir G. Wilkinson presents to us† an Egyptian breastplate containing the figures of the Sun, (Ra) and Thmei,—"Light and Truth," or "Justice;"—the Sun, Ra, being King among the gods, and the Urei,‡ the royal asps, being the symbols of majesty throughout the Egyptian system.

And such as these were the forms, such as these the visible and tangible media of communication with Jehovah which here took the place of that direct intercourse between God and his people which Moses had hoped to see established! He had brought them to this "Mount of God," if not full of heart and hope, at least with a steady faith in their elevation to the simple patriarchal allegiance which had been the privilege of their fathers. In how different a mood he saw them depart! They came "bringing no vain oblation," but the offering, he trusted, of obedient and hopeful hearts. Now, he was to see them,—from this mountain where we stood,—depart on their way to the Promised Land,—their backs bending under the burden of the sanctuary and sacred paraphernalia, which he well knew to have less holiness in them than one single aspiration to God,—one single emotion of love or hope

* Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, II. 26. † Ibid. V. 28.
‡ Suggested by Lord Prudhoe. Cited in Ancient Egyptians, II. 27, n.

for Man. Away they went,—by that opening to the right,—the tribes in their order, and "the mixed multitude" following;—all but their leader happier than when they arrived, because as much as possible of Egyptian usage had been brought into the midst of them. For the sake of this, they suspended for a time their cry to be led back to Egypt, and consented to look forward, in a fitful and vacillating way, to the Promised Land. Perhaps the heaviest heart among all that number was that of the Leader, who had found that even his brother could turn against him. But he was still full of purpose and of faith. The promises of the ancestral land before them were on his lips; and in his secret heart he rejoiced that every step removed them further from Egypt. Along that track we were now to go.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM SINAI TO AKABA.

We were now about to set forth on what might be called the most romantic part of our travels. Many European travellers have been to Sinai, returning to Suez, or to Cairo: but few have seen Akaba; and yet fewer Petra. It will be remembered that Burckhardt, with all his qualifications for making his way in the East, and all his earnest desire to accomplish his objects, failed to reach Akaba, and merely passed through Petra, in haste and hazard, and under the pretence of being a Bedoueen, under a vow to sacrifice a goat to Aaron. Knowing this, and being aware that the few who had visited these places had believed themselves in great danger,—danger to liberty and life as well as property,—we scarcely expected, to the last moment, to be able to go to either place: and the contract with Sheikh Bishara was framed accordingly. It was as follows. Each camel, 150 piastres (1*l.* 10*s.*) from Cairo to Sinai, if we took the usual route to Suez. If we went by the southern route (which we did) 165 piastres per camel. If, on our arrival at Sinai, we found it probable that we could get to Petra from Akaba, Bishara was to take us on to Akaba for 100 piastres per camel. In case of hearing no favourable news at Sinai, Bishara was to take us to Nahle,

on the middle route towards Palestine, for 100 piastres per camel. In case of our not falling in with an escort at Nahle, Bishara was to take us on yet further.—In this contract, all expenses whatever for Bishara's camels and men were included.

At Sinai, we found a letter, intended for any travellers who might arrive, which seemed to open our way to our objects. It was from a gentleman with whom we had made some acquaintance at Cairo: and he wrote from Akaba, saying that the well-known Sheikh Hussein made no difficulty about taking on travellers at that time through Petra to Hebron: but that he would not declare his pecuniary terms. Having been told that our party was coming on, he would be prepared to negotiate with us on our arrival. Our way was thus open to Akaba, at least. We should see the eastern gulf of the Red Sea, and look over upon the mountains of Eastern Arabia, and visit the Ezion-geber where Solomon built his ships for trade with Ophir, and whither our minds are continually brought in reading of the conflicts of the Idumæans and the Hebrews, for centuries after the settlement of the latter in Palestine. We were really going to Akaba, though, as Dr. Robinson observes,* "Shaw and Niebuhr only heard of Akaba; Seetzen and Burckhardt attempted in vain to reach it; and the first Frank who visited it personally in modern times, was Rüppell, in 1822."

Our route was not that taken by Burckhardt, Laborde, or Dr. Robinson. I suppose travellers always prefer their own route to any they read or hear of: and all

* Biblical Researches, I. 253.

these gentlemen may have seen something which they would pity us for missing: but I own I am sorry to think that they never saw Wadee-el-Ain and Wadee Weteer. However, we had not need all go the same road. The more divergence, the better for the information of those at home.

We left the convent on the morning of the 10th of March, at ten o'clock, and travelled till three, when we encamped in a wild place among shivered rocks. By the middle of the next day, we had left the granite, and found ourselves among sandstone, red and white. As I had a rough-paced camel, I walked this morning fourteen miles, in excessive heat. When we came to heavy sand, at two o'clock, I was obliged to mount. The heat here was too much for our sociability. At luncheon, some of the party crowded under the scanty shade of a thin acacia, whose thorns, strewing the ground, made the resting-place uneasy enough. One gentleman might be seen crouching alone, with his luncheon, under an angle of the rock, where there was just shade enough to thrust his head into. Another lay on a shelf a few feet above the sand, with a red handkerchief over his head,—thus introducing "a nice bit of colour" into the landscape; while I sat apart, quietly bearing the sunshine for the sake of a breath of air from the wadee, and being spared the trouble of speaking. Our encampment was delightful, after this; —in a wide watercourse, among the most fantastic rocks of white sandstone, and surrounded by tufts of tamarisk and innumerable bushes of flowering white broom.

On the 11th, our own party were off some time before the rest: but after an hour's travelling through

deep sand, our guide found himself at fault among the fantastic scattered rocks; and we had to wait till the Sheikh and the rest of the party came up. They dropped into our recess from behind one group of rocks or another, till all were assembled; and then Bishara himself was not sure of the way. He ran hither and thither among the slopes, and at last directed us over shelves, and down steps, and through gullies, and in and out among the glaring rocks, so that our wonder was, not that he was perplexed about the way, but that he could ever find it. We now missed the pebbly and rocky tracks which had hitherto served us almost all the way from Cairo, and found how different a thing it is to travel through sand. But, about two o'clock, we turned up among granite mountains again, and found ourselves in a gorge, compared with whose summits, Sinai and Horeb appeared almost insignificant. Every winding disclosed something finer than we had yet met with; and at last we came upon a scene to which we remembered no parallel. We all knew Switzerland; and we all agreed that not even there had we seen anything so magnificent as this Wadee-el-Ain;—the Valley of the Spring. Sir Frederick Henniker calls some of the Arabian scenery, "the Alps stripped naked." No description could better convey what we now saw. The whole gorge answered to my young imagination of the sterner parts of Greece; and especially where a dribbing spring wetted the sands, and made small pools where fresh grass sprang, and tall slender rushes, and a few thick-leaved shrubs, and here and there a bushy palm. Deep shadows were flung across, and

blazing sunshine poured down between. And we had time to fix in our minds the features of the scene; for the camels paced hither and thither, to drink at the pools which they made muddy for those behind. Presently, we proceeded more slowly still,—most willingly, for we felt we could hardly linger too long. As we turned to the right into Wadee Weteer, we came upon a scene which might almost be called verdant. The asphodel and other plants, which grew on perches and in crevices of the red rock, were of the liveliest green, while tamarisks spread their sprawling growth in all nooks and on many platforms. Not only did the camels stop to crop these tamarisks: their drivers were seen at every bush, and in the midst of every tree, gathering arms and laps full of twigs for their beasts. The white sand underfoot, the verdure skirting the mountains, and the precipitous rocks, of a rich red hue, rising so as to narrow the sky, and to lessen the glare to a pleasant light, filled us with a delight altogether new. We wound along this pass for about three miles, and then encamped in a spot, less superb than the closer parts of the gorge, but very fine. It was on a platform in a nook of the pass, where the wind came freely, and at night blew strong. We were guarded all round by solemn barren mountains, behind whose ridges the stars went down early. I lay on the sand to watch them, though warned of scorpions; for the heat within the tent was not to be borne till night. I observed here the largest locusts I ever saw;—two huge, hard, black locusts, each perched in a bush, and not moving while it was light enough to see them. Some of the company amused themselves with making

a bonfire at night, in spite of the wind, and kindly invited us to the fun; but I preferred the solemn steady starlight.

The 13th was a glorious day. We made a long journey, every step of which was beautiful. Before six we were on our way, proceeding along the gorge of Wadee Weteer till my eye was caught by a soft vision of I did not know what. A distance, a line of heavenly hues crossed the opening of the pass, so soft in contrast with the strong lights and forms of the foreground, as to make me doubt for a while whether what I saw was earth or sky. It was the range of eastern Arabian mountains, as was presently shown by the little angle of deep blue sea that came in between. We were coming down upon the Gulf of Akaba. The breeze blew cool upon our faces, and the whole company grew merry. To see both shores of this Gulf of Akaba, where the fleets of Solomon and Jehoshaphat used to ride; to be actually gazing upon the farther Arabian shore, gave us a kind of new sensation of where we were; a truth, says my journal here, "which our daily comfort rather blunts the sense of."—On the shore, the wind was strong; and we went behind a glaring yellow rock to lunch. Our noon-tide rest had now stretched out from twenty minutes to an hour, on days when we found good shade. Sometimes I could not keep awake for a single minute after alighting, but fell into a state more like stupor than sleep, however hungry I might be:—a consequence, I think, more of the excessive light than the heat; and more perhaps of the camel-riding than either. To-day, however, in the fresh wind, I was wide awake; and I vividly remember

the pleasant hour under the rock, with chibouques and conversation.

The remainder of the day's journey was easy,—trotting over hard tracks on the sea-beach for about three hours. Here we might push on, without troubling ourselves about the baggage and the rest of the caravan. We could not miss our way; and there was no danger from Bedoueens, as far as we knew. So two of us rode forward, passed the baggage train, and decided on our resting place. It was where a palm sprang out of the sand, and some bushes growing near told of fresh water. Beside this palm, and close upon the sea, was our own tent pitched; and down I went, with Mrs. Y., to bathe, under a little thicket of bushes near our tent. There was nobody to threaten us with sharks: the sands were soft: the water was warm (73°): the blue sea, with its white ripple, was like a lake among the surrounding high shores; and the sunset light was gorgeous on the double range of opposite Arabian mountains. The Gulf was here about fourteen miles wide.

In the morning, we were eager to be off again along the shore; and before six, when the dawn was growing into daylight on the sheeny sea, three of us were trotting merrily ahead of the caravan. As I looked back from the first promontory which turned us into the sea, I saw the troop scattered along the beach, and the last baggage camels pacing out from among the bushes about our camp. Sometimes in the bays we had to go slowly over fields of sand; sometimes to cross the promontories by steep paths or shelves in the rocks; and oftener, to enter the water, guiding our camels as usual; for the water was as clear as the air.

At last, we were brought to a stop, where we agreed that there were two roads, if any. The promontory before us jutted out too far to make it prudent to take the water without guidance: and there was besides only a stony wadee which looked as if nobody ever had passed through it, or ever would. So we made our camels kneel, and waited on our saddles. Others who came up did the same, till we were a curious kneeling party. Bishara passed us at length, and led the way up the stony wadee. We little knew what we were entering upon: and if any one had told us that it was the pass to Wadee Negabad, the words would have conveyed to us no more than they probably now do to my readers.

The ascending wadee narrowed to a pass of steeper ascent; and the pass to a mere mountain road; and then, the road to a staircase: a zigzag staircase of steep, irregular steps, so completely without pause that the great anxiety of every body was to keep his camel going, because every one behind was in suspension,—hanging between two steps, so that any stoppage must be worse than inconvenient. Many would have been glad to dismount: but they must not stop, even for that moment. The way was also too narrow for alighting safely. One lady jumped off; and then was in a great agony because her camel resisted being pulled forward; and there was not room for her to pass behind, to drive it. The next in the string applied his stick to good purpose; so that we were relieved from our hanging attitude. During that minute, I could glance behind me; and most striking was the picture of the sandy and stony areas below, with the long-

drawn caravan winding far beneath and up the steep. Our position must have looked terrific to the hindmost. At the top, we found ourselves on a pinnacle;—a mere point, whence the way down looked more threatening than that we had passed. I could not allow myself a single moment here; for the camels were still tail to nose all the way down; and in the same way must they descend the tremendous zigzag before me. Most of the gentlemen contrived to slip off here: but there was no room or time for me, in the precise spot I occupied, to do so: so I set myself firm in my stirrups, and determined to leave it to my camel how to accomplish the break-neck descent. Only two besides myself rode down the whole way; and I believe we were all surprised that every one arrived at the bottom in safety. There were a few slips and falls; but no harm done. The ridge of a camel is a great height from which to look down on, not only the steepest turns of sharp zigzag on the side of a precipice, but long slippery stone steps, in quick succession. I depended altogether upon my stirrups; a pair hung short over the front peg of the saddle, which save the necessity of resting one's feet on the camel's neck in any steep descent, and are a great help in keeping one steady. I do not think such a pass as this could be accomplished without them.

In the dreary scene below us we found a shady place, which yet was dreadfully hot. We staid an hour, though Akaba was yet five hours off, and it was now half-past one. The baggage-camels and dragoman of our party had gone on while we rested; so that we four must reach Akaba this evening, whether the rest of the caravan did so or not and in the state of weari-

ness and illness in which I was from the heat, this was rather formidable to think of. After four o'clock, however, the sun had so far declined as to become endurable. I took off my hat, and let the warm breeze blow in my face, and felt that I could very well reach Akaba. After passing the island of Graia, and before four o'clock, the rest of the company stopped, pitching their tents on the beach: and we four trotted on.—By the extraordinary kindness of some of our companions, a tent was offered to Mrs. Y. and me, if we would stop: but we declined it, thinking an encroachment which would have been bold anywhere, too bad in such a place as this.

Akaba was now in sight,—the fort and long line of palms, on the opposite shore, round the head of the Gulf. At five o'clock, it seemed rather further off than nearer; and the gentlemen began to think we could not hold out. Mr. E. pushed on, to overtake Alee and the baggage, and stop them, wherever they might happen to be.—Yet, fatigued as I was, I felt that evening ride to be delicious. How clear the light was,—showing us every object along the shore at the head of the gulf, as if, after sunset, the very dusk had been made transparent! There was Akaba, still and solitary!—there was the group of our camels, so minute that we could not see them move, but only barely glide: and there was Mr. E., distinguishable by his white hat, trotting fast in our service! And here were we three and a camel boy, a little group almost lost in the landscape, moving deliberately under the hills, with the clear waters undulating on our right hand, and the stars coming out over head.

Alee was so near Akaba when overtaken that it was useless to stop him: and therefore we found, when we arrived at seven o'clock, that our tents were pitched among those palms we had seen for so many hours. We had travelled above twelve hours between breakfast and dinner: but Mr. E. had seats, biscuits, and bottled porter ready for us; and soon after eight we had dined, and were quite well.

Poor Burckhardt! what a pity it is that he could not travel round the head of this Gulf as easily as we did! The spot where we came out upon the shore after luncheon seems to have been that where he was turned back. Hostile Arabs lay between him and Akaba. There is something pathetic in his notice of this turning-point. "Under these circumstances, I reluctantly determined to retrace my steps, the next day, but, instead of proceeding by the shore, to turn off into the mountains, and return to the convent by a more western route.—Akaba was not far distant from the spot from whence we returned. Before sunset, I could distinguish a black line in the plain, where my sharp-sighted guides clearly saw the date-trees surrounding the castle, which bore N.E. 1 E.: it could not be more than five or six hours distant. Before us was a promontory called Ras Koreye" (the Graia of Laborde and the maps) "and behind this, as I was told, there is another, beyond which begins the plain of Akaba."*—"My guides told me that in the sea, opposite to the above-mentioned promontory of Ras Koreye, there is a small island. They affirmed that they saw it distinctly; but I could not, for it was

* Travels in Syria and the Holy Land, pp. 508, 509.

already dusk when they pointed it out, and the next morning, a thick fog covered the Gulf." *

He was no doubt looking too far. The island of Graia was lying close inshore, and very near; and its ruins must have caught his eye if he had not been looking out over the gulf. His guides told him that the infidels had put buildings upon the island, which made them call it "the Convent." Laborde explored this island, crossing to it by a raft, which he and his companion, M. Linant, rowed with palm-branches for oars: and they planted the French flag on a rock, and thus took possession of a place which had been deserted since the fourteenth century. The Crusaders fortified it; and their walls remain. My note of its appearance on the 14th of last March is, "the island of Graia uprose brown from the blue waters;—two brown eminences, with brown fortifications upon them."

On our arrival at the head of the Gulf, (I think, about an hour before reaching our tents,) we had fallen into the great Hadj route,—the broad trodden way by which the annual caravan proceeds to Mekkeh. As we rounded the head, of course we had the sea on our right hand: and on the left was the plain of Akaba,—the end of the great Wadee Araba which extends hither from the Dead Sea, and which is supposed to have been once the channel of the Jordan, in the days when it flowed uninterruptedly from its fountains in Anti-Libanus to discharge itself into this Gulf, before that convulsion which caused it to be lost in the Dead Sea. This plain looked very barren,—stretching in between approaching lines of mountains; and its soil is too salt,

* Travels in Syria and the Holy Land, p. 511.

for two or three miles inland, to grow anything but a few stunted bushes. — In the neighbourhood of our tents, we observed a few inclosures; but saw no houses that night. There were people in abundance, however, filling our little camp, which was considered so far from safe, in the absence of the rest of the caravan, that no less than eight guards were appointed for the night.— This was arranged with the Governor of Akaba and that important personage, Sheikh Hussein, on whom so much of our fate was to depend for some weeks to come. They came just when we ladies had dropped asleep while waiting for our late dinner, and thus we missed seeing them. They had pipes and coffee in the gentlemen's tent, where they gave an impression of being both grasping, and in one another's interest. How it turned out with regard to the Sheikh, we shall have abundant occasion to see.

In the morning of the 15th, we were up and in the sea before sunrise;—the clear, soft, warm sea! How beautiful our place of encampment was, under the palms upon the shore! While we were dressing, we heard that two of the gentlemen had arrived,—a deputation from the parties behind, that no time might be lost in pursuing the negociation with the Sheikh about going to Petra. When I came out of our tent, I found one of these gentlemen writing his journal on the shore, —after his long ride, and before breakfast! There he sat on the shingle, book on knees, ink-horn before him, a fine example of energy!

The rest of the caravan might now be seen, a little moving knot of objects, on the opposite shore. Miss C.'s floating white veil told who they were. While we were

at breakfast in the open air, they came up, heated and hungry,—glad of any thing we could give them till their own meal could be prepared.

After breakfast, I wrote my journal in our tent; but found it so hot that when I had done, and wanted to read Laborde, I looked about for some shady place near, where I might have the advantage of any air that might be stirring. I found a very small shaded nook under a wall, close at hand; and there I carried camp-stool, book, and a double umbrella, to moderate the light. The camp-stool and my feet sank into the deep sand, which was yet cool: I lowered my umbrella, so as to shut out all objects, and there I sat,—my imagination being presently as much at Petra as my bodily frame was at Akaba. I was first startled by the flapping of something scarlet on the sand, under the edge of my umbrella: and amazed indeed I was at sight of what the umbrella had hidden from me. Within a yard of me sat the Council, smoking away in full and solemn negociation. The scarlet belonged to Sheikh Hussein himself; his robe was of scarlet cloth over a striped crimson and yellow tunic of satinet. He wore a prodigious shawl turban, lowering over his extraordinary face. At the first piercing look he fixed upon me, I felt that it was a face which would haunt me for life. He sat with his back against the wall, pouring out incessant clouds of smoke, and attended by his son, his pipe-bearer, and other vassals. Our dragoman was in waiting. In front of the Sheikh sat the deputation of the caravan, —three gentlemen on camp-stools, looking as excessively solemn as they could. As I found myself there, I thought I might as well stay; and very interesting

I found the scene.—One spectacle which I thought exceedingly pretty throughout the East was the earnestness and grace of the interpreters. Here was Alee,—sometimes in his eagerness, dropping on one knee, sometimes grasping the Sheikh's hand with his own left, while he laid down his meaning upon it with the right: at other times using the most vehement action, and then the most persuasive tones;—now following the Sheikh's movements in unconscious imitation, and now listening with his whole soul to his employers' statements;—it was a charming picture: and the negociation this morning was of such importance that I saw the spectacle to perfection.

What passed at this time was as follows:—Out of the Sheikh's thousand camels, he could not collect and select the requisite number for our caravan in less than seven days: and for this we were, of course, unwilling to wait: so he and Bishara were to take us on with nearly our present set to Petra in three days. Others were to meet us there, for the transit of the rest of the Desert to Hebron, which would occupy about seven days from Petra. We were to stay a few days at Petra. The sum demanded was 20*l.* a head to Hebron, including every thing,—an insurance of ourselves and our property, baksheesh, and the tribute to the Sheikh at Petra. Two-thirds of the sum was to be paid at once, and the rest at Hebron. Alee told us that Hussein would by this make not more than 2*l.* or 3*l.* a head, as he had to pay five sheikhs to go with us, guards, and the subsistence of his camels and men. We were to set out the next morning.

We were warned that there might yet be a hitch:

and so it proved: and not one but many. I little thought ever to have witnessed the working of any passion in such perfection as I saw that of avarice in Sheikh Hussein, up to the last moment before our parting at Hebron. He cannot help himself now. To this passion he is a slave, every day, every hour. His life, his mind, his countenance are ravaged by it. The whole intensity of the Arab character,—an intensity which in others is divided among the objects and affections of their lives,—their families, their camels, their enemies, their religion and their desert wilds,—is in him concentred upon gain; and a terrible spectacle it is.—Not to trouble the reader with all the changes which took place in the course of this day, when the old man returned repeatedly to the charge, to see what more he could get,—a circumstance which left us to the last uncertain whether we should reach Petra or not,—here is the contract as it finally stood.

Sheikh Hussein made himself answerable for our safety, and was to refund the value of any property which might be lost. For the whole journey to Hebron, except the tribute of 100 piastres (1*l.*) a-head to the Sheikh of Petra, Hussein was to have 1000 piastres (10*l.*) for each person, and 250 piastres (2*l.* 10*s.*) for each camel: the whole to be paid in advance, except the half of the camel money, which was to be paid at Hebron. To this the gentlemen adhered, through all the demands made by the Sheikh from day to day; by which demands he obtained nothing but our disrespect and compassion.

During this day, we looked about us as much as we could. We were struck here, as every where along the

shores of the Red Sea, with the vast quantity of shells thrown up in shoals along the beach,—from the minutest to some magnificent ones, as large as a man's head. Many varieties of little crabs were moving in all directions. Swarms of yellow locusts and handsome dragon-flies flitted about in the sun: and little fish leaped out of the waters in great numbers.—There are no boats at Akaba; but men go out fishing on small rafts. To-day the sea was so calm that we saw them go as far out as the eye could well follow them.

In the afternoon we took a walk so far as to turn the flank of the palms. There were many inclosures which contained, besides thriving young palms, figs, pomegranates, and a prickly tree whose abundant fruit, now green, is said to be delicious when eaten fresh and ripe. We passed several water-holes and two shadoofs. There were many children abroad,—healthy and clean-looking, and of a free and upright carriage.

We walked up to the castle, and, to our surprise, found no difficulty in obtaining entrance. It is a stout fortress, built for the protection of the Pilgrims; with two cannon,—one on the wall, and one in the court. Well as the place looks outside,—really imposing,—we found it bare and foul within. The magazines are chambers of one story, built against the walls, all round the court; and their flat roofs support frailer dwellings, covered with palm leaves. Besides accommodating the little garrison, there is thus room for the merchandise which comes this way, and for its guardians: but we pitied those who have to take up even a temporary abode in a place so squalid and dirty. We were thankful that we had encamped outside.—From

the turret where the cannon is placed, we obtained a fine view, immediately after the sun had gone down:—the amphitheatre of mountains behind, with the area of sand between them and us; the palm groves between the castle and the sea;—the sea, like a golden lake, and the mountains retiring along its shores on either hand. With precisely the same natural features, how much quieter is this scene now than when Solomon's ship-building was going on!

Before we went to rest,—and it was late before we had the tent to ourselves,—the money was paid to the wide-awake Sheikh, the wearied gentlemen had put away their money-bags, with the hope that they should never again have so much ado about a bargain, and we had notice that we were to be off by eight, the next morning. So I made up my mind to bathe at five;—my last sea-bath till we should come upon the Mediterranean at the end of our Eastern travel.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM AKABA TO PETRA.

We bathed at five, and breakfasted early, as we had planned; but we were far from being off at eight, as the Sheikh had promised. There was so much disputing among the camel-drivers as to their shares, and so much unwillingness on the part of some to go among a strange tribe, for fear of robbery and loss of camels (though the Sheikh guaranteed to them indemnity, and two camels for every one they might lose) that those hours were consumed in wrangling and noise which we had hoped would have carried us up the first part of Wadee Araba before the heat of the day. The Sheikh, all in scarlet, sailed about, looking very dignified, and pouring out smoke like a chimney, wherever he moved among the palms. It was ten o'clock before we mounted; and we were almost hungry again by that time, and as weary with the hubbub of the last four hours as with a day's journey.

We left the inclosures of Akaba on our left hand, and the palms, and the exquisite blue sea, which narrowed to a line, and then was lost. After that, the way was dreary enough; more so than any region we had yet passed through:—a sandy valley, at least two miles wide, with high and sharp-cut mountains for

boundaries on either hand. There was something fine, however, in the infinite desert before us, lost in haze and distance, and sometimes rising in an immeasurable slope tufted with little tamarisks and thorny acacias.

It seemed to-day as if our desert freedom was all over. Hitherto, I had kept by myself as much as I pleased; and every true desert-traveller needs and chooses, if possible, to ride alone. With the sole precaution of never losing sight of the whole of the company, I had pushed forward, or lingered behind, or wandered away on either hand, at my own pleasure. But to-day we found, to the great concern of many of us, that we were to have this liberty no longer. We were drilled into order like so many recruits. If two or three of us were riding half a quarter of a mile on either hand, the Sheikh came or sent after us, to drive us back to the troop. This added much to the wearisomeness of the journey; and the more because no one of us, I rather think, believed that there really was any danger from foes: and we did not yet know Hussein well enough to consider that his sins of rapacity might be the cause of dangers which we need not otherwise apprehend.

Hussein, his son, a fine youth of sixteen, and the inferior sheikhs,—of whom, I think, there were three,—careered about us on pretty, active little horses;—or horses which looked small beside the camels. The sheikhs carried spears; and wore something red or green about their dress which gave them a distinguished appearance. The escort wore the true desert head-covering, which our own servants adopted now in travelling,—the handkerchief carried, not in the form

of a turban, but let down over the head, so that its four corners and fringes shade the face and neck, or float in the wind;—the handkerchief being bound on the head with a rope, or a skein of yarn. We had forty armed guards, independently of the camel drivers. Ten of them marched in front, and ten at a considerable distance on either hand;—on a rising ground, when there was any; and always on the look-out. The remaining ten were with us,—off duty. They were of the Alaoueen tribe:—a much grander tribe,—much richer in camels and herds,—than that of our good Bishara. But O! how much better did we like him, with his bright face and genial spirit, than the iron-souled great Hussein!—It was so hot to-day, and we had been so early tired, that we were not sorry when, at half-past three, Hussein leaped from his horse, and stuck his spear in the ground, as a signal that here we were to encamp.—It was in a bare and exposed place too, where our tents were pitched too close together to allow us any feeling of privacy.

We were now certainly on the track of the Hebrews, and should be for the greater part, or all of the rest of the way. It was by this wadee that they came down after being turned back into the wilderness from Kadesh, and then refused a passage through Edom. They left Aaron dead on Mount Hor, and then came down by this Wadee Araba to the sea, to get round to the east of Idumæa. More weary than ever must they have been of the Desert, after having been to the very borders of the Promised Land, and sent back thence all this weary way into the waste.

Having seen no one this day, we were permitted

rather more liberty on the next. The sheikhs still galloped about, scouring the sandhills, and darting hither and thither among the bushes when we wound along a gully, for the sake of its scraps of shade. I must say, we looked rather like a company of banditti at such times, creeping along, as if in hiding under the covert of the shrubs, between the sandhills,—a swarthy savage with his matchlock peeping up, every now and then, to see if all was clear to the horizon.—Once or twice in the day's ride, the Sheikh dismounted, and took possession of the best shade; and we found him, when we came up, enjoying his chibouque, with his son and attendants standing round him. This was a signal that we were to await the arrival of the last baggage camel: and I usually took advantage of the opportunity to walk on for an hour or two, though the heat was now so excessive that I was warned to cover my head as carefully as the Arabs do, and to wear a thick white cotton cap under my hat, during the noon hours. The gentlemen's broad-brimmed grey hats were covered with white; and they carried handkerchiefs in the crowns.

To-day we had experience of the Khamsin. When the heat had become so intolerable that all moved forward silently in dull patience,—some perhaps with a secret wonder whether they should ever breathe easily, or feel any muscular strength again,—a strong wind sprang up suddenly from the south. Though it was as hot as a blast from an oven, and carried clouds of sand with it, I must say I felt it a great relief. I was aware that the sensation of relief could not last; for the drying quality of this wind was extraordinary, and

immediately felt upon the skin. Still, the sensations under the evaporation were those of relief for the moment; and before they were over, we stopped, and could get under the shelter of our tents. The thirst which this wind caused was of course great; but we had plenty of water and oranges. I was surprised, after all I had read, to see how like thick fog an atmosphere full of sand can be. The sand was not coarse enough to be felt pattering upon the face, though it accumulated in the folds of one's dress: but it filled the air so as completely to veil the sunshine, and to hide altogether the western boundary of the wadee, and all before us. The eastern mountains, near whose base we were travelling, rose dim and ghostly through this dry hot haze. We were to have proceeded to Wadee Gharendel, where there is a small spring and a palm or two; but this wind caused us to halt sooner, for the advantage of a sheltering sandhill.

We passed Wadee Gharendel, the next morning, not more than half an hour from our resting-place. Its single palm, ugly in itself, looked well, standing as sentinel at the entrance of the narrow pass.

My camel was insufferable to-day: and I walked many miles, preferring thirst to having my back broken by my uneasy and uncertain camel. Since leaving Akaba, we had found our camels more and more troublesome from their obstinacy in stooping to every twig of tamarisk and acacia they could get a sight of. Instead of pacing steadily on, as in the peninsula, they would make a rush at every bush, right or left, and poke down their heads, every few minutes, to crop something,—each poke throwing the rider into a very

uneasy position. We did not yet know that our villanous Sheikh had brought no food for either camels or their drivers. He trusted to our compassion for the feeding of the men, and to the Desert shrubs for the subsistence of the beasts. On the second day, the lagging began.—And now, on the third, we were to have reached Petra in the afternoon: but on both evenings the Sheikh had stopped early, on some pretence; and so he did this night: the real cause being that the camels were too weak from hunger to go through a proper day's journey. We were not experienced enough yet, however, to discover all this; and it was a week more before we became fully aware of Hussein's iniquity. All I knew at present was that my camel went very uneasily, and that it was a less evil to walk when I could.

The only way in which I was permitted to walk was a rather strange one. I must not wander in the least: and the slowness of the baggage camels was intolerable, as they grew weaker. So I used to alight when in the rear of the caravan which came to extend over a space of from half a mile to a mile. I walked forward to the first bit of shade I could find in advance of the troop, and sat down till all had passed; and then walked forward again. This day we had left the sand, and were on hard ground, and amidst the glare and deep shadow of rocks. At two o'clock, Mount Hor became visible before us; and to the north-east, a sea of mountains, among which we were to find Petra.—Some of the party began to be much displeased with the Sheikh when he stopped us before three o'clock, instead of bringing us near to Petra. His excuse was

that we were entering among the mountains, and that he could not find a place for our encampment further on. He had now failed of his promise about distances every day: and it was clear that for some purpose he was protracting our journey.

Thus far, we had seen no living creature since leaving Akaba. This, which appeared wonderful when we expressly reminded one another of it, seemed natural enough at the time. Before our Desert travel was done, we found how much more striking and impressive it is to encounter men in the Desert, than to pass many days without seeing one.

We had not yet been distressed for want of water; though some of the party now began to look ruefully at what was offered us to drink. It was certainly rather reddish in colour, and a good deal too warm, though Abasis kindly took care to hang the skin which was next to come into use on the shady side of his camel.

On the morning of Friday, March 19th, we were six hours from Petra: and now the least sanguine of our party began to believe that we really should stand within that wonderful place. I was still possessed with the idea I always had of Petra;—the image I had formed from reading Laborde and others; that Wadee Mousa was a ravine,—a long and narrow ravine, which was flanked and surmounted by excavated rocks, and to which there was only one entrance. When, at night, I looked back upon my morning notion of Petra, it was like looking back from middle age to one's teens.

We were under weigh by six o'clock, and were pre-

sently among passes of wild fantastic mountains. In a glen, we came upon some oleanders, springing vigorously, and some wild flowers. The ground was damp in patches, and there was dew upon the weeds. Never before did dewdrops look so bright to us. The rocks here were in towering masses, appearing distinct from each other, and most fantastic in their colours and surfaces. I should not have believed that any purely natural tinting could have been too bright for the eye of the lover of nature: but here, the colouring of the rocks is distressingly gaudy. The veining of the surface is singular. Every one cried out "Mahogany!" and the veining is like that of mahogany: but the colours of this veining are like nothing to be seen any where else:—scarlet, maroon, sky-blue, white, lilac, black, grey, and green! A stain of sky-blue and grey winds away in a ground of crimson; and a riband of scarlet and white in a ground of lilac; and so on. The stone is extremely friable, so that the mere rubbing with the finger end turns it into dust. The corrosion of the surface of the rocks by time and weather has so much the appearance of architectural intention, that it is at first difficult in Petra itself to distinguish the worn from the chiselled face of the precipices: and while approaching Petra, one seems to be perceiving the rudiments of the wonders of the place to come.

Alternating with these towering precipices, and at times surmounting them, are rounded eminences which look like downs, both from their forms and the greenish hue which is spread over them by their being strewn with the spines of the tamarisk. Tufted with blackish shrubs, they are not beautiful; but no characteristic of

this singular scenery is more distinctive than the contrast between the gaudy precipices and the pale mountains behind.—At the summit of the first steep and slippery pass, we looked abroad upon a noble view, of the billowy sea of mountains round about us, the partially sunned Desert stretching to the horizon, the sinuous and tufted wadees looking like desert paths among the sandhills and nearer rocks, and our camel train winding for a mile back among the pass and recesses below. We felt ourselves really now among the haunts of Esau and his tribe, and of the children of Ishmael, whose hand was against every one, as every one's hand was against them.—And when, a little further on, we stopped in a hollow of the hills to rest, it was strange to remember who came here in later days, and what an extraordinary depôt this was for the merchandise of the East, for a course of centuries. Up this pass came long trains of camels, laden with the silks, muslins, spices and ivory of India, and the pearls of Arabia, and amber, gold and apes from Abyssinia, and all the fine things that the luxury of Europe derived from the far East. These all came through Petra, and were lodged there for rest, and for no little traffic, as in a place wholly inaccessible by any foe. The eagle might pounce upon the kid among the areas of Petra; and the lightnings might dart down from the summits. But no human enemy could enter to steal, or arrow from human hand to destroy. Up this pass then had wound many a caravan laden with oriental wealth; and in this hollow had rested perhaps many a company in ambush, and no doubt many a baffled foe. Those single trees, perched on fantastic heights, were

some of them old enough to have been living in those days,—landmarks to the traveller, and signal stations to the desert warrior.

Then our path — our very narrow path, — lay over these whitish hills, — now up, now down; and then again we were slipping or jerking down slopes or steps of gaudy rock. About eleven o'clock, I saw the first excavation,—a square door-way in a pile of white rock on the right hand. Finding that we were not to arrive by the entrance which Laborde declares to be the only one,—the Sîk,—I determined not to dismount, in order to ascertain whether there really was more than one entrance practicable for beasts of burden. I entered Petra first, (after the guide,) and can testify to the practicable character of this entrance, as I did not alight till we reached the platform above the water-course.

Petra might be said to begin from that first excavation. For nearly an hour longer we were descending the pass, seeing first, hints at façades, and then, more and more holes clearly artificial.—Now red poppies and scarlet anemones and wild oats began to show themselves in corners where there was a deposit of earth: yet the rocks became more and more wild and stupendous, while, wherever they presented a face, there were pediments and pilasters, and ranges of door-ways, and little flights of steps scattered over the slopes. A pair of eagles sprang out, and sailed over head, scared by the noise of the strangers; and little birds flew abroad from their holes, sprinkling their small shadows over the sunny precipices. Nothing gave me such an idea of the vastness of the scale of everything here as those

little birds and their shadows. What a life it must have been,—that of the men of old who gathered their comforts about them in such homes as these, and led their daily course among these streets and areas of Nature's making, where the echoes, still busy as ever, mingled the voices of men with the scream of the eagle and the gush of the torrent! What a mixture of wild romance with the daily life of a city! It was now like Jinnee land; and it seemed as if men were too small ever to have lived here. Down we went, and still down, among new wonders, long after I had begun to feel that this far transcended all I had ever imagined. On the right hand now stood a column, standing alone among the ruins of many, while on the left were yet more portals in the precipice, so high up that it was inconceivable how they were ever reached. The longer we staid, and the more mountain temples we climbed to, the more I felt that the inhabitants, among their other peculiarities, must have been winged. At length, we came down upon the platform above the bed of the torrent, near which stands the only edifice in Petra.

This platform was sheltered on two sides by rocks; and as my eye became accustomed to the confusion, I could make out, among the masses of building stones which lay between it and the empty watercourse below, the lines of five terraces, and, at last, the piers of many bridges. This platform was thickly grown over with some plant of the lily kind;—we think, the red amaryllis, which must richly adorn the area when in blossom. Our servants pitched our tents here, in opposition to the Sheikh, who would have had us take up our abode in the caves, to save the expense of watchers.

We much preferred, however, the cleanliness and airiness of our tents, and the lily carpet which pushed its leaves under their curtains, and stretched under our beds.—The first thing Alee showed us was a scorpion, which he brought with the tongs from our tent,—a hideous, yellow, venomous-looking creature, about two inches long. Two more were found in another tent.

We were seriously desired not to move a step from our platform without guards and companions; and we had quite enough to look at for the present in the faces of the extraordinary precipices which walled us in. I spread my cloak on a rocky shelf, where I could quietly overlook the preparations for our abode of some days in this place which I had never hoped to reach. I did not laugh now when Mr. Y. said to me "Well, how do you like being at Petra?"

END OF VOL. II.

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EASTERN LIFE,

PRESENT AND PAST.

BY

HARRIET MARTINEAU.

"Joyful to receive the impression thereof, as the eye joyeth to receive light; and not only delighted in beholding the variety of things, and vicissitude of times, but raised also to find out and discern the ordinances and decrees, which throughout all these changes are infallibly observed."—*Bacon. Advancement of Learning, I.*

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CHAPTER VIII.

PETRA.

We lost no time in beginning our researches. We were to be here at least three days; but we were as impatient to look about us as if we must merely pass through, as poor Burckhardt did.—The first thing I did was to ascertain the direction of the stream, in order to understand Laborde's plan: for he gives no compass points. Having done this, and examined our platform and what I could see from it, I was presently clear as to the following particulars.

The site of Petra is not a ravine, as we had been wont to suppose; but a considerable basin, completely closed in by rocks; sufficiently ventilated, however, by the chasms and defiles left in the precipices. The area is of undulating ground, there being scarcely a level spot anywhere, beyond our platform.

The stream, dry except in winter, must have been a considerable river in former times,—for depth, though not for width. At present, it is either a fitful brook, flowing shallow over white sand, and among bushes and weeds; or it is a rushing torrent, which presently spends its force, and leaves the channel dry. As I said before, the channel was dry when we were there. In old times, its depth was considerable, as is shown by

the remains of the embankments, and piers of the bridges: and there can be little doubt of its constant flow in those times. At present, the stream is diverted, some way above, to irrigate a fertile district, leaving the torrent dependent on the rains on the nearer mountain.

It seemed clear to me that the whole of the rising ground, on each bank of the river, as high on our side as the single standing pillar, was formerly terraced. I believe I traced five terraces on our side; and there may have been a good many more. Some large building, with a colonnade towards the river, stood on our platform. The bases of many columns are visible; and others lie shattered, with their fragments disposed in the order in which they fell. The quantity of building stones lying heaped on both banks is greater than can be described or estimated.

The only remaining edifice in Petra is that called Pharaoh's Palace;—a rather vulgar building, Roman in its style, and adorned with stucco garlands. It is cracked and mouldering, and will not last long. It was very near our platform. We may consider as belonging to it a Triumphal Arch standing between it and our tents. These are all in the way of buildings. But it was immediately clear to me that little is remaining also of the rock-abodes, in comparison with what once existed. I think that travellers have not only much underrated the number of rock-dwellers, but failed to perceive that what remain are the mere *débris* of what the precipices once presented to view. An observant eye may detect remnants of stucco ornaments very high up many rocks, and in great numbers. Again, many

of the excavations are so difficult to reach, and some are such mere walls or surfaces, that it appears as if the whole front of the rock, to a considerable depth, had fallen: and in these places there was usually that extraordinary gaudiness of colouring which marks the more friable portions of the rock;—that is, those portions where, exposure to the air having begun, the oxyde of iron in the rock carries on the decomposition. In these places, a finger end will bring down whole handfuls of sand. Where the rock is dun-coloured, the surface is usually well hardened. — Again, the conduits, cisterns, and flights of steps scattered over the rocks and among the precipices indicate a larger number of rock dwellings than remain now, — very great as that number is.

And how very great it is! I began with a notion that I should like to count them;—having read that they were about two hundred. With this two hundred running in my head (as one never gets over believing what one reads) I continued for some days to think of these rock-abodes as computable by hundreds, till I was startled by hearing one of the gentlemen wonder how many thousands there were. We were sitting on a rock at the moment: and as he pointed up two or three ravines, counting the holes in a single rock face, and reminded me how small a proportion these bore to the whole, I was indeed astonished. I could not admit the full extent of the marvel at the moment: but I soon saw that he was right. Dr. Robinson says * "The most striking feature of the place consists, not in the fact that there are occasional excavations, and sculptures

* Biblical Researches, II. 529.

like those above described; but in the innumerable multitude of such excavations, along the whole extent of perpendicular rocks adjacent to the main area, and in the lateral valleys and chasms; the entrances of very many of which are variously, richly, and often fantastically decorated, with every imaginable order and style of architecture. The cliffs upon the east and west present the largest and most continuous surfaces; and here the tombs are most numerous. But the spur from the eastern cliffs . . . as well as other smaller spurs and promontories, and single groups of rocks, both in the north and south, are also occupied in like manner. All these sepulchres, of course, looked down upon the city of the living; but others again are found in retired dells and secret chasms, or sometimes among the heights on either side, to which flights of steps cut in the rock lead up in several places." Dr. Robinson's conclusion that these excavations were all tombs, except the few which might have been temples, appeared to us on the spot very extraordinary. Elsewhere, rock tombs are, or have been, sealed up,—contain, or have contained, dead bodies, and may be counted by dozens to a large city,—each containing many bodies. Here, they are standing wide open; no dead body (except of a modern Arab or two) has ever been found in them, and they exceed any number of houses that the area of the city can ever have contained. To these considerations we may add that it is the common practice of the Arab tribes of the Desert to live in caves; and all their modes of living appear to be aboriginal: and that the scriptural expressions relating to such districts as this speak of habitations as well as sepulchres. Isaiah speaks of one

"that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock:" * and Jeremiah exclaims "Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord." † Obadiah, again, declares his message to be "concerning Edom," when he says, "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, 'Who shall bring me down to the ground?' Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord." ‡ "There shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau," the prophet goes on to say: and mournful indeed is the vacuity now. Every deserted place is mournful enough;—a grass-grown farm-house in Ireland; a city buried under mounds in Egypt: but nowhere else is there desolation like that of Petra, where these rock door-ways stand wide,—still fit for the habitation of a multitude, but all empty, and silent, except for the multiplied echo of the cry of the eagle, or the bleat of the kid. No,—these excavations never were all tombs. In the morning the sons of Esau came out in the first sunshine to worship at their doors, before going forth, proud as their neighbour eagles, to the chace; and at night, the yellow fires lighted up from within, tier above tier, the face of the precipice.

One other feature which immediately struck us, as it must every observer, was the bad style of art wherever

* Isaiah, XXII. 16.. † Jeremiah, XLIX. 16. ‡ Obadiah, 4.

any façades remain. The grandeur of the place is not, to my eyes, at all from the ornament wrought in the rock, or stuck upon it, but altogether from its adoption as an abode by the ancient tribes of the Desert, and their adaptation of such a fastness to their purposes. There is a strong taint of colonial vulgarity in all the Roman work; and in looking at it, our wonder was something very different from admiration.

Such were the cursory observations we could make from our platform. But we soon went further. As soon as we had lunched, and collected a few of our armed Arabs as a guard, we set out in a body to make a general survey, in preparation for further research to-morrow. We turned off our platform at the right-hand (north-eastern) corner above the stream, and descended into the valley which is overhung by the Corinthian Tomb, as it is called, and other conspicuous excavations. The water-course and lower grounds in this valley were thickly grown with oleanders, all the way.—We passed the Theatre, the so-called Egyptian tombs, and a large number of unmarked excavations, pausing nowhere till we came to the Khasne.

Burckhardt calls this temple* "one of the most elegant remains of antiquity existing in Syria:" and other travellers have spoken rapturously of it. I think much of the charm must be owing to their having come suddenly upon it from the defile of the Sîk, after an anxious and toilsome Desert journey, when every work of art, in a shady place, and among thickets of oleanders, would appear beautiful. Its position is wonderfully fine; and its material and preservation very striking:

* Travels in Syria and the Holy Land, p. 424.

but it is inconceivable how any one can praise its architecture. This temple, called by the Arabs "Pharaoh's Treasury," is absolutely set in a niche. It stands in a cupboard, seeming to be made to fit it exactly. When I speak of its situation being wonderfully fine, I do not refer to this feature of it, which is good merely because it is unavoidable,—there being no space in which a building could be placed in these ravines. This peculiarity,—of a façade in a niche—is imposing in its place: but the beauty of its position lies in its being at the meeting point of two ravines, so that the Khasne suddenly confronts the traveller who arrives by way of the Sîk. The material is a pale rose-coloured stone, which is shown off most delicately by the dark shrubs which grow before it.

The height of the entire façade is between sixty and seventy feet. Of the six columns, one has fallen; and the bases and capitals of others are somewhat corroded. Above, there is an interrupted pediment, between whose halves stands an "insulated cylinder," as Burckhardt calls it; a sort of miniature temple, crowned with the urn which the Arabs believe to contain Pharaoh's treasure. They cannot bring themselves to pass it without a shot; and every man of them, unless prevented, pops away at the urn, in hope of bringing down some of the gold from the inside. There are elaborate carvings of garlands, &c., and many defaced bas-reliefs. From what remains of these, we judged them to have been bad.—The interior has nothing to show but handsome space, the principal chamber being sixteen paces square, and about twenty-five feet high.—A few broad steps lead to the portico, on either hand of which is an ornamented

door, leading to an empty side-chamber. There is nothing in the main chamber: throughout the whole building, no niche, or pit, or other sign of the place having been put to any use. There are two small hollows, in which we fancied we saw uncertain traces of bas-reliefs: but the place is obviously unfinished. There are no door-posts; and the walls within are merely chiselled, and left rough.—In the near neighbourhood of this temple, I saw several flights of steps, wandering away up the precipices. We went but a few yards along the Sîk, as we were to explore it fully to-morrow: so we returned first to the Theatre.

The Theatre!—in the place where Esau and his tribe came to live beside the eagles! Here it was, however; its ranges of semicircular seats cut out of the rock. Its area is supported by massive masonry, and not so encumbered with *débris* and vegetation as to prevent our easily reaching the seats. I climbed to the top, in order to enter some of the excavations ranged above,—at a great height. I found them mere square cut, empty rock-chambers.

When on the top range of the seats of the theatre, I called one or two of my companions to witness the inaccuracy of the view from this point, given by Laborde. We were on the precise spot whence the sketch was taken, as was shown by a number of neighbouring objects. It was the distance that was in fault. Before us rose a lofty barrier of rock which, of course, closed in the view: but in Laborde we have, in place of this rock, a fine retiring distance, and long perspective of façades, and a spacious valley with a meandering river, such as was never yet seen in Petra. It is a serious

matter giving false impressions of a place at once so remarkable and so little visited as this. In marking, in his plan, the Sîk as "the only Entrance to the town," Laborde may have followed Diodorus, who says there was but one way in, and that artificial; though he should not have repeated this without verifying it: but the elaborate view, with its non-existent valley and stream, is a gratuitous piece of misleading, for which I see no excuse.

The effect is fine of the lofty rock springing straight up from the back range of seats. Shallower steps than the seats run up the middle. This theatre is supposed to have seated about three thousand people.

We next crossed the defile, and climbed to the extraordinary excavation whose platform is supported by ranges of arches in solid masonry. The obtaining a platform was clearly the object here; and prodigious labour it has cost, in tier over tier of stone arches. Several of these are entire and visible, among the heaped ruins of others. The platform supports lateral colonnades,—the only lateral colonnades here. Above these colonnades were deep square holes, which indicated excavations on a second story behind. At least, we supposed so; and there were clearly upper chambers in the central portion of this temple: above these, above cornices, and pediment, and at a vast height, was the crowning urn. The central chamber is very large, and not less than forty feet high. Its walls are like those of the Khasne, merely chiselled: and it contains nothing but the little partition walls which the modern Arabs have built up of loose stones. The walls were gay with the purple, red, and grey streaks

which Dr. Robinson compares to "watered silk,"—as our companions did to mahogany.

While we were here, a series of strange wild heads popped up from below the platform,—showing that the ragged regiment of the Sheikh of Petra was upon us. Suleiman, Sheikh of Wadee Mousa, and of the tribe Aulad Benee Israel, was here in person. His followers were a dark and wild-looking set of fellows, with their ready match-locks, daggers and spears, as could be seen: but they never did us any harm, nor offered any. The Sheikh came to demand his fee of 100 piastres per head, for our entrance into Petra and abode there: and this being immediately paid, he was thankful and quiet. How different a state of things from that which existed so lately as the visits of Burckhardt, and Captains Irby and Mangles!

This evening, our friend Hussein suddenly remembered that he had forgotten two things. He had shown himself very expert, from day to day, in so visiting the tents, and making demands of the dragomen, as to obtain his coffee and tobacco from our company, and charcoal and et ceteras from the servants. He now went the round to declare that he had forgotten to say that he must have a robe (no trifle!) from each tent, and a sheep from each individual of the company:—ten robes, and fifteen sheep. He got nothing by remembering this at last.

It had been cool weather all day: and this evening and night, it was so chilly that we sat in our cloaks, and slept ill from cold.—Our good Bishara came to bid us farewell, and would not be satisfied without repeatedly kissing all the gentlemen. One, who was stooping

over his writing, offered the top of his tarboosh for the salute, but was not allowed to escape so. As for us ladies, we gave our hands to be kissed with hearty good will; for we esteemed the worthy fellow, and were sorry to part.—In the morning, he was still there; but after we went forth to the Sîk, we saw him no more.

We were to have set forth at half-past seven: but we were detained an hour by the disputes among the Arabs about the division of their money.—As far as the Khasne, we went over the same ground as yesterday: and then we entered the Sîk,—the most extraordinary entrance to a capital city, from its indomitable wildness, that was probably ever seen. This main street of Petra is about two miles long. Its width varies from ten to thirty feet; and it is inclosed between perpendicular rocks which spring to a height of from one hundred to seven hundred feet. These are singular conditions of a main street. It is paved and drained, but badly lighted, for the rocks so nearly meet as to leave, really and truly, only that "strip of sky" which one often reads of, but which I never remember to have before seen, except in being drawn up out of a coal-pit. Captain Mangles speaks of the sky being completely hidden in places by the overlapping rocks above: but this escaped my observation. The dimness, however, at the bottom of this chink, where we were forcing our way among the tamarisks, wild figs, and oleanders, was memorable enough.—The pavement is of large slippery stones, worn in places into ruts by ancient chariot wheels. A conduit runs along, and a little above, the wayside,—a channel hollowed in the rock: and in parts there are, at the height of thirty

feet, earthen pipes for the conveyance of water. On the face of the precipices, sometimes upright as a wall for three hundred feet, are curious marks left by more ancient men than those who paved the street, and laid the water pipes:—shallow niches, and the outlines and first cuttings of pediments; and tablets begun and discontinued. On looking up, one sees a solitary tree, bending over the ravine from a height which makes a mere bush of it. In the fissures of the rock spring brambles, the bright green caper plant, and fig trees with translucent young leaves, and roots and stems which accommodate themselves to the crevices by inconceivable twists. Down the water-drips hang bunches and strings of delicate ferns; and round the smooth curve of some protruding rock lies an ivy garland, pushed forth from the recess behind which is curtained with it. The homely mallow, the wild geranium and red poppy, spring in corners where there is a deposit of earth, and skirt much of the way; and the pale blue forget-me-not lurks in the hollows under the shrubs where there was lately a pool. On ledges above one's head are heaped stones in such quantities as show how fiercely the torrent drives through this pass after the winter rains: a liability which was, of course, guarded against when this was a capital city.

In the proudest of those days, there must have been an indomitable wildness in this main avenue;—almost as much as now;—almost as much when the commerce and the pleasure of the city passed through it,—on the backs of camels from the East, or in chariots from Rome,—as now when a party from far England was stumbling among its *débris*, full of wonder and baffled

speculation. The sharp lights and deep shadows must have been the same then as now; and the gay hues of the rocks. Were the sky-high trees and rock-weeds there? and the eagle spreading his wings on his eyrie, as I saw them to-day? And did the small birds roost in the holes of the precipice, and speckle it with their shadows as they flew? And did the singing bird,—warbling to-day like the nightingale of the place,—find a natural perch within the city gates? How strange must have been the strong echoes of city noises in this gorge?—the cry of the camel drivers, the rattle of chariots, the common talk and laugh of citizens, and the play of children! And what different people must have been met there from the few we saw to-day! Instead of eastern merchants and Roman soldiers, and a Greek traveller or two, I saw to-day a group of goats and their herdsmen, entering into the deepest shadow from a reach of sunshine; and a child standing with two kids on a point of rock above my head; and a wild troop of shaggy Arabs, clattering their arms as I passed; and here and there a solitary figure, with his matchlock, brown tunic, and white teeth, perched on a pinnacle, or striding over a distant slope.—These features of wildness carried me back far beyond the Roman and Greek times; back to the days when the children of Ishmael and Isaac married, and settled their posterity here. Further back than this we cannot go; for we know nothing of the Horims who were driven out from hence by Esau. But Esau, and his wife, the daughter of Ishmael, and her brother Nebajoth, and his descendants the Nabathæans were probably not unlike the wild Arab goat-herds and hunters

we met to-day, except that they carried bows instead of matchlocks. Their other arms, their dress, face, and form were probably much the same as we saw. We had only to fancy them multiplied and inhabiting the holes in the rock; and we might put the last three thousand years of the world's history out of sight.

After exploring above a mile and a-half of this winding defile, we came to a narrow part where an arch springs from side to side at a great height: an arch whose purpose is unknown, as it appears impossible to ascend to it. It is too narrow to have been a bridge, and too steep to have been an aqueduct. This arch is the most striking object in Petra to a hasty observer; and almost every modern traveller before ourselves was necessarily a hasty observer. Such a city-gate was probably no where else ever seen. Beneath the arch, on either side, is an empty niche, and pilasters much defaced; and on the eastern side is a second, smaller niche.—A little further on is the entrance to the pass,—a sharp-cut passage between perpendicular rocks. A little thicket of wild figs and oleanders nearly shrouds the entrance; beyond which rises, on the opposite side of a small area, a massive wall of masonry, supporting a platform, on which might have stood a fort. Here the excavations again begin to abound; and for about a mile, we had all about us white rocks, squared into towers, hollowed into vaults, and cut out into abodes and baths consisting of many chambers, and adorned with pediments, and in one instance, with four small pyramids springing from the architrave. The rock chambers which are crowned with these pyramids appeared to us to be baths; at

least, the lower series; for there are two stories. The lower stories have to be reached by a clamber, far from easy, to the base of a flight of wide shallow steps, cut in a rock too smooth to afford a footing otherwise. In the principal lower chamber is a deewán extending round three sides, and ascended by two steps at each extremity. From a lateral chamber, there is a window looking into a dark apartment, so full of little pits as to resemble the working vats in a brewery. Travellers have hitherto supposed these to be graves: but we thought them more likely to be baths. The encroachments of nature upon these by-places of art are curious to observe. In one chamber near, I remarked a vigorous night-shade growing: and from a deep pit sprang a large fig-tree, covered with green fruit, which was still climbing to the light. In another chamber, a leafing thorn was the only inhabitant. In every lateral defile of this suburb of Petra, (as we may call it,) that I entered, there were more, and still more, excavations,—aristocratic abodes for the living or the dead, retired into aristocratic retreats. There they were, in fissures and corners, just disclosed behind the green thickets!

I saw here, in the outskirts, a substantially built drain, first deep cut in a slope of rock, and then well built with thick sides, and now choked up with dust and rubbish. And afterwards I observed what appeared from below to be gutters and spouts brought across the rocks at the height of the pinnacles of the loftiest temples, and down their sides, as if to carry off from the excavations the waters which would otherwise stream down upon them after the rains.

When we came home to rest at noon, we were told that the clergyman who had made a great point of being at Jerusalem for Palm Sunday would waive his wish, in order not to hurry the rest of the party from Petra. We were all much obliged to him; and he was himself well satisfied afterwards, when a further knowledge of our Sheikh and his ways proved that we could not have reached Jerusalem in the time proposed.

Our further exploration to-day was near home. We examined the Triumphal Arch and Pharaoh's Palace,—the only edifices in Petra, as I have said. They are not worth many words,—being Roman, and in a bad style,—the ornamental work of the palace being in stucco, and very florid. At the back, the stucco is carried up to successive stone projections, which form tiers of cornices, in which we saw nothing of purpose or beauty. By the marks on the walls within, the whole interior seems to have been covered with stucco, little of which however remains. One curious circumstance is that the arch of a recess in the innermost chamber has been built through to the back. This and the lateral chambers had a second story; whereas the vestibule appears to have sprung to the roof.

We now observed so many piers and otherwise unaccountable projections in the embankments of the water-course as to make us suppose the river to have been covered in;—the whole water-course vaulted.

While here, my eye was caught by an appearance of large gratings in the face of the western rocks; and we climbed up a rough and steep slope to examine them. They remain wholly mysterious to us all. Small, shallow, irregular holes are cut in the rock at

such distances as to leave a tolerably regular grating: and many of these holes,—so many as to indicate that all were formerly thus treated,—are filled up with stones, of a different grain from the rock, cemented in, so as to form a rough surface. The only conjecture I could form is not a very probable one;—that this was done to procure a reliable surface to work upon,—to be afterwards covered with stucco;—the rock being here extremely friable.—High up on this western face was what the gentlemen unanimously declared to be an inscription:—but it was impossible to get nearer to it, to make out the character.—Speaking of inscriptions, I fear we all overlooked one which Captain Mangles tells of, on a tablet under a pediment of one of the temples, the character of which Mr. Bankes declared, and proved by comparison with his notes, to be precisely the same with that of the mysterious inscriptions in Wadee Mokatteb, and round the base of Horeb. This is an observation of so much importance, that we must hope the next European who visits Petra will look for this tablet, and bring home a copy of its character. In a cave further north than the western precipice, I found the base of a column: but, as there was none to answer to it, nor any trace of others within the caverns, this was pronounced to have been placed there by some "accident."

The Sheikh was troublesome this evening about our not going on, though he had said at Akaba that we might stay a month at Petra, if we liked. We were informed that our bread and ale were all consumed; and that the water was half an hour off, so that we had to pay two piastres for every skin that was brought. We

were provided with biscuits and a little porter; so we did not think of moving the sooner for the bad news.

On Sunday, the 21st, after service, we set off for the temple of El Deir. In describing the view from the summit of Mount Hor, Captain Mangles says,* "In the midst of this chaos of rocks, there rises into sight one finished work, distinguished by profuseness of ornament, and richness of detail. It is the same which has been described as visible from other elevated points, but which we were never able to arrive at. It bears N.E. half N. from this spot; but the number and intricacy of the valleys and ravines which we hoped might have led us to it, baffled all our attempts. No guide was to be found. With the assistance of the glass, we made out the façade to be larger, to all appearance, than that of the temple at the eastern approach" (the Khasne) "and nowise inferior to it in richness and beauty." We were fortunate enough to reach this temple; and when we afterwards saw it, as Captain Mangles did, from Mount Hor, we could well imagine how tantalising it must be to a stranger to see it in no other way.

The ascent to it was formerly by a staircase winding up the mountain to the height of 1500 feet. We reached the foot of this staircase by turning in among the oleander thickets, past Pharaoh's Palace, and pursuing the northern ravine. We found the steps much worn away; and we had to climb over many a slope of slippery rock: but it was still a magnificent avenue to a temple. It is well that there was no question of material in the case: to get the workmen up there

* Travels in Egypt, &c., chap. VIII.

must have been quite enough. The little flights of steps cut for the workmen's sake, to raise them to the summit of their work, had a singular effect; and these seemed to throw light on the purpose of other short and odd staircases, twisting hither and thither among other precipices. I think no one feature of the region struck me so much.

The façade is a good deal like that of the Khasne; but El Deir is even more unfinished. There is some preparation for wings, which were never cut. There are disks where garlands were to be sculptured; and pedestals, without statues or urns, and niches left empty. Some of the party thought the capitals of the pillars were only half sculptured: but I am not sure that they were not meant to remain as they are,—a clumsy approach to the Ionic. There was a curious mixture of what we must suppose to be the native architecture with the Roman; and the result is not at all beautiful. There is only one chamber, which measures about forty-five by forty feet, and is nearly forty feet high. It has an arched recess opposite the entrance; and the stone mouldings of this arch were fastened on, and not chiselled out of the rock. Some of these mouldings remain, and show how they came there. We saw many instances of this attachment of stone decorations; and everywhere, holes for the pins which had fastened them on.

From the fine area in front of this temple, we climbed to another, higher still, with nothing to remark upon in it, but a niche whose framework was elaborately ornamented. Even here, on this pinnacle in the deserts of Idumæa, we encountered the eye-sore of travellers'

names! Many were scribbled on the compartments of carved stone in this excavation.—On the platform before the entrance, we found the bases of many columns. A colonnade on this high perch must have had a singular, and perhaps a very fine effect.

We mounted one stage more;—to the summit over the top of this temple: and thence we had a magnificent view. El Deir was just below, a yellow temple completely niched in red rocks. Its area, grown over thick with lilies, looked well: but there was a more remarkable one near,—at a rather higher elevation, whose circle of hewn stones and shrubs indicated very clearly that here had been a circus. How was this possible, unless, as I was sometimes driven to suppose, the people had wings? Fluted columns, covered thickly with cement, lay in fragments beside the circle of stones.—North and east arose the red rocks which form the material and barrier of the city on that side; and above them swelled the round, whitish mountains which shut in the whole. Then the view was bounded by rocks, with holes, flights of steps, and occasional trees, as far as the south, where towered Mount Hor, crowned with the tomb of Aaron. Dark peaks arose between us and it; and from the ravine below was heard the sound of running waters. Then, as we turned, we seemed to look upon chaos, so tremendous was the confusion of black and brown mountains near, and yellow beyond,—bare and precipitous to a degree oppressive to the sense: while halfway between them and us, was the most singular relief that could be found even in this singular place;—a perfect hermitage! An extremely narrow path of rock, with a sheer precipice

on either hand connected an otherwise isolated summit with the height on which we stood: and in a face of that summit was a single excavation, which had that narrow bridge and a flight of steps all to itself. I never saw an abode, for the living or the dead, so utterly solitary as this.—Beyond all these objects, and spreading away to the south and west, to the utmost limit of vision, was the Desert,—now streaky, now shadowy,—all immense and still,—with no marked objects but a faint hill or two on the furthest horizon, and a chain of hills to the west. Of the piling of the rocks, and the retiring of the ravines near, and of the chaos of mountains behind, there is, says my journal, no giving an idea: nor can there be a hope of preserving such imagery in its impressiveness. No faculty is equal to it.

Mr. E. found in a cave, this day, a dried corpse. The Arabs said there was nothing to be seen there; and they might not know of it: but there it lay, wrapped in well-woven cotton. There was some flesh left on the bones,—as dry as they. From the modern sewing in the joining of the wrapper, we concluded this body to be that of a not very ancient Arab. In only one other instance did we meet with human bones:—we found a heap of them under some regularly laid stones in a cave of the northern ravine. If these many thousands of excavations were all tombs, where are all the millions of skeletons gone,—leaving actually no trace of one single body?—Possibly the bodies may be yet to be found, in closed receptacles, in some neighbouring valley of Tombs.

This morning, the Sheikh came to get a pipe, under

pretence of trying to persuade us to go on to-morrow morning. This evening, he required us to take on the same number of camels that we brought from Akaba, though our stores were much reduced. In order not to refuse everything he asked, we agreed to this. His reason for the request became plain, as men and camels grew weaker from want of food, so that it required the same number to do the diminished work. —When I say that we agreed to this and that, I mean that Mr. E. did. By this time, Mr. E. found himself charged with the whole business of managing the Sheikh, and arranging the journey affairs, as far as the European party had anything to do with the matter at all. It was Mr. E.'s knowledge of affairs and very fine temper which brought this responsibility upon him. Every one was glad to devolve the business upon one so capable and so kindly willing, and who had at once proved himself so steady and so good humoured in his management of the old miser with whom he had to deal. It was very curious and very interesting to see the effect of his manliness and fine temper upon the Sheikh. The old man mistook the moral dignity for that of high birth and station; and declared his conviction that Mr. E. was one of the greatest men in Europe. It was clear that he really did stand in awe of our friend; and what we should have done without the help of this awe, we often wondered.

This day, we had no milk and no eggs; and we were warned that only two fowls were left. We made ourselves quite easy, however, while we had good mutton and biscuit. It rained this evening, and I put my hand out of the tent to feel the rain;—the first for so

many months! Now it had come, we were to have enough of it.

I was awakened in the night by a slap in the face from my canopy, which was dancing about from the rocking of the tent. The tent curtains were open, and flapping, as if preparing to take flight. I awoke Mrs. Y., and we called the servants to look to the tent-pegs, which they had the greatest difficulty in fastening down, from the strength of the wind. The dust poured in, till our very bedding was penetrated by it. Our clothes were draggling on the ground in this dust; and some of them, with three rolling bottles of wine, were picked up outside. Two sets of sleepers in the camp had their tents blown clear away to some distance. In the morning, I found that dust had lodged between the pages of our books, and even in the depths of my saddle-bags. There was then intermitting rain, which settled into a determined down-pour at noon. To me, one of the most observable things about this rain was its effect upon my own health. For many weeks I had been very unwell; and, since leaving Cairo, had suffered from a tormenting face-ache. Now, before it had rained an hour, I felt wonderfully relieved; and the benefit of this rain lasted nearly to Damascus, where we had more.

Early in the morning, two of us went a short round, happily choosing the watercourse for our scene of observation. We descended into it, and studied the embankments and piers to some distance on either hand, little knowing how fortunate we were in using the opportunity. It was evident that there were large and substantially built reservoirs above the river, near

Pharaoh's Palace. The number of cisterns and tanks among the rocks, at various heights, we had observed before.

After breakfast, a large party of us went forth in defiance of the heavy showers, thinking that, once among the eastern temples, we could flit from cave to cave, and see a great deal with little wetting. We did see a great deal; but the wetting was complete enough. We went through the whole range of the great eastern temples, which it would weary the reader to hear of one by one. In one,—that which has three tiers of columns, we discovered that the architrave, which had been stuccoed, was painted in perpendicular stripes.—In several of these temples, there is an arched recess opposite the entrance; and in two or more, we observed niches within this recess. Whether this looks like urn-burial, or heathen sacrifice, people must judge for themselves. In two instances only, we found the ceilings divided superficially into compartments. As for the rest, what we found was pits, stone deewáns, and recesses in rows, like stalls in a stable.—The capitals of the columns and the cornices were fastened on, and not cut out of the rock; and afterwards stuccoed and painted. In one case, the rock had failed, near the top of the temple; and the failure was supplied by masonry, supported on an arch. The water-courses by the sides of the temple, and, I think, a horizontal gutter, were plainly distinguishable here.

These temples, with their florid decorations, naturally strike a stranger more than anything else at first,—they mingle so oddly with the other features of the scene: but one soon neglects them for the far more

interesting excavations of an earlier date. I suppose the primitive abodes (whether of the living or the dead) were those which have no ornament at all;—nothing whatever being done to the outside. But after these comes another order, specimens of which may be met at every step. These have their whole exterior and its several parts, where this can be managed, inclining inwards, in the Egyptian mode; and sometimes backwards also. Some of the doorways, and many of the pilasters, diminish towards the top. But the most distinctive mark of these Arabian abodes is their parapet. From a point in the middle of the cornice, a flight of steps,—that is, a representation of such in relievo,—retires;—three, four, or six steps according to the width of the building: and a line resting on the top step finishes the parapet. Sometimes the steps converge from the sides, instead of departing; and then of course, they meet in a top step. This appears odd, and a fancy devoid of beauty, at a distance; but it is an ornament appropriate to the place, and it looks very well there. We may remember that stairs in the rock were a great blessing to the limbs, and a great beauty in the eyes, of the inhabitants of this fastness; —as much so perhaps as the fluted column in the eyes of Egyptians and Greeks, to whom the flutings were sheaths for their arms; or the laurel-wreath to the Romans, in whose minds it was associated with ideas of victory. The steps of these Nabathæan (or other Arabian) parapets are homely in the comparison: but they are a natural device, and therefore not a wholly ungraceful one.

There was nothing in our ramble this morning so

pretty as the ground. Among the rocks, there were flowery patches, like gardens. And the slopes up to the higher excavations, and the platforms and recesses among the uneven rocks, were carpetted with grass and wild flowers, and clumped with shrubs. Among many familiar wild flowers, I found one plant which we never see wild at home. The scarlet anemone grew richly and abundantly here,—as abundantly as I ever saw poppies in a field.

For some time, we eluded the worst of the rain by running from cave to cave: but at last, by some accident, the party was scattered. One group had gone home early,—afraid of the damp: another was in a lower tier of caves. A third had found dry wood, and made a great fire. Two of the gentlemen and I found ourselves in a cave which was cold, without guide or dragoman, while the rain was coming down like a shower-bath. We waited and watched: and a very pretty thing it was to watch the little white torrents dashing down from the summits, here and there, as far as we could see. But these same waterfalls were sending streams down the intervals of the slopes before us,—in some places already ancle-deep. The whole sky was one dark grey: and it struck me that, not only was there no prospect of its clearing up, but that we were too far from home to run the risk of further delay. My companions objected that we had no guide, and were quite ignorant of the way; whereas somebody would certainly be coming soon to look for us. I had a pocket-compass with me, however, and was quite sure of the general direction. I knew that the tents lay south-west, on the other side of the water-course.

So, off we went, as straight as an arrow;—across gullies, over hills, through ancle-deep water,—for it was no time for picking and choosing our footing. One of my companions was lame that day; but on he must go, over stone-heaps and through pools. We found a way down into the water-course,—walked many yards along it,—knowing now where we were,—and got out of it not far from our platform. Within three minutes, before I had half put off my wet clothes, I heard a shout:—the torrent had come down. Down it came, almost breast-high,—rushing and swirling among the thickets and great stones in the water-course, giving us a river in a moment, where we had never dreamed of hoping to see one! As soon as I could, I ran out to the verge of the platform; and I shall never forget the sight. It was worth any inconvenience and disappointment. We forgot the dripping tent, from which little rills ran upon our bedsteads: we forgot the lost hours of this last day, and our damp wardrobes, and all our discomforts. There was the muddy torrent,—or rather the junction of two torrents, which divided the channel between them for some way;—the one which had come from the Sîk, and past the theatre, being muddy, and the other, from the north-east, being clear. On came the double stream, bowing and waving the tamarisks and oleanders,—the late quarters of the Arabs who were now looking on from the opposite bank!—Just before sunset, I went to look again. The white waterfalls were still tumbling from the steeps; and the whole scene was lighted up by a yellow glow from the west, where the sky was clearing. The torrent was still dashing along, making eddies among the stones; and

beyond it, in a thicket, under a wall of rock, was a group of Arabs round a fire, whose smoke curled up above the trees.—At night, I went out once more; and that was the finest of all. The torrent was too deep within its banks to be touched by the moon, which was now shining brightly. The waters could scarcely be seen, except in one spot where they caught a gleam from an Arab fire. But at this hour, its rush seemed louder than ever. I was startled to see how many were looking at it with me. All along the opposite ridge, and on every point of the descent, were dim figures of Arabs; and in the precipices, there was quite an illumination. Row beyond row of the caves gave out yellow gleams; and in the moonlight rose little pillars and wreaths of white smoke. The Arabs had come up from the whole country round, at the sound of the waters; and I had seen Petra populous once more.

I could not have supposed I could like a reeking tent so well. Our clothes were hung up in all directions, for the chance of a drying: the air seemed heavy with steam. My bed was wet, though I had bundled it up under a square of Mackintosh cloth, as well as I could: but we were very happy still. The best thing was, it was now impossible to go to-morrow; the tents being too heavy with wet to be portable. It was no trifle to me to have lost all my aches and pains at once: and then there was the thought that I had seen Petra with its river and its wild citizens. We ordered in a large pan of charcoal, and made a very pleasant evening of it, after all. I thought at the time as I think now, —that there is an agreeable, as well as useful, virtue

in these accidents of travel; and that those who do not find it so had better make themselves comfortable at home.

The next day, the 23rd of March, was a profitable one. Instead of going from cave to cave, which could not now teach us much more, we made it our object to obtain some general views of the place; in which we succeeded. The company divided on this last day. Some of the gentlemen went again in the direction of the Sîk, to make another attempt to copy the often-mentioned Greek inscription, which was on a façade near the Khasne. The gentlemen had tried before to spell it out; and now it was to be copied, if possible. It was the wish of our own party to trace the area of Petra to the north; so we set out by ourselves, with a sufficiency of armed guides.—We thought these Arabs very fine-looking people, with faces full of life. They were always civil to us, and evidently much amused at our dress and ways. Our guides examined Mrs. Y.'s cloak and my trumpet, and showed us their muskets in return. They carried muskets, matchlocks, heavy clubs, and short swords. I was never tired of noting their wandering figures, brown and grey, on points of rock and sunny slopes.

Our guides assured us that they led us round by the most northerly part of Petra. Of course, they know best, and must be right; but there were two ravines which I would fain have explored, if we had had more time. We passed through some curious chasms this morning, saw many troughs and cisterns, with steps cut over the slopes to each;—overlooked many excavations, and were completely puzzled by a new discovery. We

found several pits cut in the rock, one of which had steps, and the others foot-holes, down one end; and these pits led each to a subterranean place which was too dark for us to explore. I hope the next traveller who goes will look to this. The most striking of the new excavations which we saw was a series of ascending doors up the side of a ravine, like the doors of houses in a steep street. This series, and a set of façades in stages, withdrawn behind and above one another on the southern outskirts, are among the venerable features in the architecture of Petra.—To-day we saw a large tank, partly walled with masonry, placed close by one wholly cut out of the rock. The wall was deep and solid, and the inside of the tank had been stuccoed throughout.

Partly by steps, and partly by sheer clambering, we reached a very high point,—a round summit,—from whence we obtained as fine a view of the whole place as its own obstructions allow. Nothing could be more unlike the gorge I had imagined before I came. We looked down on a large area of undulating ground, with its terrace lines now clearly marked enough, and the sites of many great buildings as evident as the still-standing Palace itself, with their overthrown columns lying beside them in round fragments. The water-course wound through the midst, with its confusion of shrubs and bordering rocks. To the South, appeared the single standing column, stationed above the craggy way by which we had arrived, and by which we were to-morrow to depart.—Our platform and tents now appeared to be nearly in the middle of the area. Behind them rose rocks, range behind range, pierced with

portals, gradually increasing in height, and offering more façades, till the eye, travelling eastwards, arrived at the valley where the theatre is, and could detect the dark cleft of the Sîk. Further round to the east, rose the great group of façades which we visited yesterday: and then the whitish outside mountains showed themselves, giving an idea of an opening to the north, which the guards, however, deny. All the rest of the circumference was filled up with vast precipitous summits, (behind which El Deir was hidden), gorges, and the mystery of steps, cisterns, and caves, till the eye arrived at the western façades, and the single column again. This bird's-eye view was very valuable: and I do not know that it indicated any one great object left unachieved; though, as I need not say, there is work for many successive travellers, and for many weeks of research, whenever a qualified party will set their minds upon going through with it. The only thing I much regretted leaving unvisited was a pyramid perched upon an extraordinary height;—we thought higher than El Deir. We caught a sight of it now and then between the clefts of the precipices; and best, I think, from the platforms before the eastern façades. We have no idea what it is, or how it is to be reached.

In the afternoon came the Sheikh again, with new demands! The conference between him and Alee was a capital spectacle,—Alee on his haunches before the iron-faced old man,—the dragoman's mobile countenance now astute, now winning! Hussein refused porter; but his heart was softened when Mr. Y. offered him figs. He gained nothing else by his demands: yet he embraced Mr. E., and declared that he was certainly

the greatest man in Europe, and one whom he would always have for his friend.

In the evening, Mr. W. came to give us the result of his visit to the Greek inscription. It was soon told. The whole façade had fallen,—brought down, no doubt, by the rains of yesterday! When the party arrived, they found the way blocked up by masses of stone; and the guides were aghast at the ruin. It was well for us, and more than we could have expected, that they did not attribute the mischief to the profanation of our visit, and take vengeance on us accordingly. Mr. W. searched, and found a bit of the inscription: but as a whole, it is irrecoverable. That far-famed work is gone for ever! This is a warning to us not to judge of what Petra was by what we see now. It is natural to suppose a sort of immutability in a rock-fastness like this: but we see here how much depends on the structure of the rock, and the influences which operate upon it. The forces of wind and water are great at Petra: and the presence of oxyde of iron here, as of saltpetre in the columns at Karnac, seems to insure the fall of works which would appear likely to greet as many generations as the everlasting hills.

I again went out at night, and saw the fires of the Arabs, even in some very distant caves. But instead of clear moonlight, there were clouds driving in the cold rising wind. I lingered over this night view; for it was the last. In the morning, we were to be off; and the most romantic vision of the travels of my life would be withdrawn.

CHAPTER IX.

MOUNT HOR.—FROM PETRA TO THE FRONTIER OF PALESTINE.

On the morning of Wednesday, March 24th, ten of our company were off before seven, with a party of guides, to ascend Mount Hor. The rest of our number were to set out later, and to await us with luncheon at an appointed spot, while the baggage camels were to proceed still further, that our tents might be pitched before we reached our resting-place. This separation of our party showed that the Sheikh apprehended nothing from enemies just here, though he had been so cautious after leaving Akaba.

I walked out of Petra, wishing to have my last look of it undisturbed. It was more striking than ever; and especially the inclosing rocks, with their cloven summits and nest-like habitations. The last object, belonging to Petra itself, which was visible, was the single column, which we left standing like a sentinel above the pass. As I walked from it, I left Petra to its mists and mysterious quietude, and turned my thoughts to Mount Hor, which rose immediately before me.

We were assured that the ascent was only 1500 feet from the high ground on which we stood.—We were well pleased to be permitted to ascend this mountain;

but I certainly had no idea at the time how rare was the privilege we were enjoying. Burckhardt was prevented, both by fatigue and the opposition of his guide, from going further than "the high plain called Aaron's terrace, at the foot of the mountain upon which his tomb is situated:" that is, the plain on which we now emerged from the bed of a torrent, which we had been following for some time. Here Burckhardt sacrificed a goat to Aaron, fulfilling the pretended vow by which alone he was enabled to get even thus far. He declares that he afterwards much regretted having failed to visit the tomb. Laborde and Linant had to hurry away from Petra without ascending Mount Hor. Dr. Robinson was not permitted to attempt it. Captains Irby and Mangles went up, by a path needlessly difficult, it appears; and they came down the same way; thus missing the very remarkable objects on the western side of the mountain.

Captain Mangles says of the ascent, "We began to mount the track, which is extremely steep and toilsome, and affords but an indifferent footing. In most places, the pilgrim must pick his way as he can, and frequently on his hands and knees. At the steepest points there are flights of rude steps, or inclined planes, constructed of stones laid together; and here and there are notches cut in the rock, to receive the foot. The impressions of pilgrims' feet are scratched in the rock in many places; but without inscriptions." Though we went up the same side of the mountain, we must have been led by a different path, for I remember nothing of going on hands and knees; and my journal says of the ascent, "It is easy,—as rocky ascents usually are, mounting

from platform to platform by stones and water-courses. There were many signs of the late rain, and the wild-flowers were fresh and pretty. Mr. W. found a red tulip. From the highest platform below the summit, we saw, niched in the precipitous opposite mountain, the façade of El Deir: and extraordinary it looked! I could not but think of old Aaron, coming up here to die, and wondering what his thoughts were and those of his companions." I have always thought that little narrative * eminently beautiful. It is so brief, so simple, so full of calm, penitent obedience!

The Mohammedans make a great saint of Aaron. They have built his tomb on the summit of this mountain; and the place has been visited in pilgrimage for centuries, and by multitudes. Times are much changed now, as I thought when I stood on the summit; for these bigots have so far surrendered their horror at Christians as to permit us to see every thing here for 20 piastres a head,—the excuse for the charge being that it was to pay for candles.

Just below the summit, some of the party found a fragment of a column, and some bits of marble. Within the tomb,—which is a square building, with a cupola rising from the middle of the roof,—we found a piece of handsome pavement of inlaid marble: and more fragments, some wrought and some plain, were mixed in with the rough flooring. Two very small carved capitals were lying on the ground, and three pieces of the shaft of a column composed three steps of the outside flight which led to the roof. Unfortunately we had no interpreter with us to obtain information from

* Numbers, XX. 22—29.

the old keepers of the tomb as to whence these things came, the dragoman being with our friends and goods below. The most mysterious thing in the tomb was a round, polished black stone (which, however, one of the gentlemen believed to be a lump of glass) fixed in the wall, and, judging by the mark on the wall round it, kissed by multitudes of devotees.—In the chamber stands a sarcophagus of stone and marble, carved, on the end next the door, with an Arabic inscription, which had once been on a blue ground. This was covered in like an oven, and wrapped over with a heap of sordid cloths,—votive offerings. Rags and shreds of yarn are hung round in great quantities.—There is a crypt, reached by a staircase from this chamber, and we went down to see the place where the body of Aaron is supposed to have been laid. It is a mere cupboard, within an unhinged grating.

I went up to the roof for the sake of the view,—one last view, from a height, of the boundless Desert. Its horizon line was so high as to make one look again; to be sure that one had not taken the hazy sky for it. There it lay, with its broad lights and streaks of shadow beyond the crowd of mountains about us. Even my journal declines describing these, saying only that wildness is the most indescribable of all the attributes of scenery, and that the wadees running between the masses catch the eye, and seem the only avenues out of chaos. The wind at the top was not high, but rather cold.

We descended the mountain on its north-east side, by what seems to have been the Calvary path of devotees, by the steps cut and facilities provided. It

is very precipitous, but thus made easy. For some way down, it was like a winding staircase: and this staircase led to a singular work, not far from the summit. Alighting on a small platform, I could not but think it artificial; and on descending a staircase at one corner, like that which led down to the Nilometer, I found a very large reservoir, arched over with fifteen arches, which supported the blocks of hewn stone composing the platform. The descent to the reservoir was also arched. The cavity was not full of water, but there was still a good supply. Burckhardt says* "The plain of Haroun and the neighbouring mountains have no springs; but the rain water collects in low grounds, and in natural hollows in the rocks, where it partly remains the whole year round, even on the top of the mountain:" and this is clearly the chief reservoir. When we looked up from below the platform, we saw that it was supported by a wall of massive masonry;—a great work. On the next area, we found such heaps of building stones, and long lines of foundation, as showed that large erections had once stood here. There were traces of terraces, one above another; and a pit which had evidently been a large tank. The place seems to have been little short of a city: but now we found no signs of present habitation, except in a shallow excavation, where the floor was strewn with dried reeds, on which stood a cauldron. A large flock of goats was seen further down; and the herdsmen probably lived in these caves.—In a stony valley, an hour and a half from the summit, we met our camels. The ascent, about which we had taken our time,

* Travels in Syria, &c., p. 430.

occupied two hours: and now, after mounting our camels, we descended for two hours more, before we joined the rest of our party, and sat down to lunch just after two o'clock.

I was struck by a little incident to-day, which seems to me curious. At a difficult part of the ascent, one of my friends advised me to try his stick. Of course, I would not deprive him of it: so another of the gentlemen cut one for me, from among the low, stout trees which grew near. But one of the guides was carrying his cobbous, which he was desired to lend me, as more convenient on account of its handle. The cobbous is a stick with a very peculiar handle, which makes it precisely resemble the Power symbol of the Egyptian gods, and which is like no other staff that I know of. The Arab, otherwise a very obliging man, was evidently reluctant to make the exchange, even as a loan: and for two days, during which I carried his cobbous, he never lost sight of me. He kept near my camel, and hung round the tent, and looked in, to point to the stick, and sent me messages to remind me that it was only lent, and to ask when he should have it again: and he would not exchange it for anything whatever. I was disposed to think, from observation of him, and of the two or three others who carried the cobbous, that it was their symbol of Power or dignity: and then I exchanged sticks with him again, to his evident relief. He was like another man when he had snatched his cobbous, and hugged it once more.

The rest of the day's journey was a continued and pretty steep descent, for an hour and a half, into the plain; and we encamped in Wadee Araba. The moun-

tains showed every variety of hue that we had seen in the Peninsula. One black mass rose beautifully out of the sands on our left; and while I was admiring it, my eye was caught by our tents, ready pitched at the foot of one of its spurs, and beside the shrubs of a water-course which bounded our camp on the other side. I was not sorry to find we were so near our resting-place, for my camel had been very troublesome by lying down, whenever my attention wandered from my rein. The animal had had an easy day's work, as I had not mounted till after noon. Though it had cropped at every bush we passed, I was not fully aware how far the poor beast was exhausted with hunger.—We had notice from the Sheikh this evening that we must be stirring early in the morning.

On the 25th, our journey lay through the wadee; —plain riding, sometimes among shrubs, where our camels made a very inconvenient rush at the tamarisk twigs, and were always trying to lie down. To avoid the irksomeness of this, I walked the greater part of the way, sometimes over water-courses so muddy as fairly to daub my boots;—a sign that the rain had been here too. I saw three large flocks of wild geese, which flew round and round in apparent confusion; and some of the company observed a herd of gazelles afar. It was so hot that we waited an hour for luncheon, rather than sit down where there was no shade. In half an hour after remounting, the Sheikh wanted to encamp; but we began to think we should never reach Jerusalem at this rate, and rode on. I happened to be foremost of our company, and I thus came in for a fine sight.

As usual, ten armed guards were in the van; and

the sheikhs were pushing their horses hither and thither. The scouts had ascended a sandhill, in advance, and a little to the right; and it was plain that there was a commotion there. Hasan, the Sheikh second in dignity, galloped up, rose in his stirrups, shook his spear, flung away his turban, letting his top-knot stream in the wind, and galloped away again, raising the sand in clouds wherever it was dry enough. Then, what a hubbub there was! The guards were mustered, the camels driven together in a mass, the sheikhs flying about, and giving notice that we were to be attacked by Bedoueens from behind the sandhills. The matchlocks were made ready, and swords and knives looked to. Just at this moment, when I was at the height of expectation of seeing the grandest of Desert sights, an old negro camel-driver ran up, snatched the rein out of my hand, and trotted my camel away, pulling it forward with all his strength. By every sign I could think of, I ordered him to give me my rein: but the old fellow was as imperious as I could be; and we were nearly out of sight of our guard before I came in the way of a dragoman who could compel the man to do as I wished. I rode back, but met some of my party, who said we were to wait till the rest of the caravan came up. There was a gathering and delay behind; and soon a message arrived that one of the ladies had fainted,—not from fear, but previous illness,—and could not come on. Here we waited an hour, near a pretty little oasis; a jungle of reeds and bushy palms. When the alarm seemed over, we dismounted, and sat under a thorny-acacia. We wondered whether this little affair was

real or a sham: but agreed that if it was a sham, the drivers were not in the plot. Their alarm was real enough.—Long afterwards, when we were in Syria, we learned that the matter was indeed serious. Sheikh Hussein was smuggling us through the territory of a tribe with whom he should have shared the money paid for our passage. The old man was really terrified, but pacified the Bedoueens by some means, so that they let us pass now: but they rose on him, on his return, shot his beautiful horse under him, and killed six of our escort. Poor fellows! it was no fault of theirs.

At the end of an hour, we saw the rest of the company slowly approaching, and we mounted: but we went on only for a few minutes,—to the foot of the white hills which we were to cross the next day.—We heard no more of the robbers; but there was a different kind of robber in the camp at night,—a wolf which, no doubt, came after our sheep. One of the gentlemen saw it; but it was gone before he could get his gun ready.—I think it was this evening that Mr. E. came in, in a hurry, to order our rice to be boiled for some of the men,—having discovered that our camel-drivers had lived upon grass for two days. The Sheikh had provided no food for them. The matter was now becoming serious. We went a shorter distance every day, and were perpetually delayed from the inability of the baggage-camels to keep up with us. Our own beasts were feeble; yet my driver had more than once jumped up behind me without leave. He was forbidden to do this again, as the beast was in no condition to carry double: but I believe the man was almost as little able to carry himself.—There was much doubt

this evening whether our invalid companion could proceed to-morrow; for she was very ill. Happily, there was an excellent mesmerist in the company, who tried his power upon her with admirable effect. She revived surprisingly, had a quiet night, and was in the morning able to go on.

During the 26th, we traversed the skirts of the mountains of Seir, crossing ridges of truncated sand hills, and dropping into basins or wadees, tufted with shrubs. We encamped, in a high wind, at the foot of the pass of Sufa, which we were to cross very early to-morrow.

Mrs. Y. and I were off on foot before six. This pass is supposed to be the one by which the Hebrews attempted to enter Palestine the first time, from Kadesh, when they were driven back to their long wandering. Before us was a limestone rock, believed to be a thousand feet high. It was split by a ravine, the right side of which we pursued, while the camels, and most of the walkers, took the left; and very picturesque they looked, winding up the heights. At the top, where the ravine closed, and was surmounted by a fort, there was scarcely a footing for the camels, the steep slope being bare, shelvy limestone, with occasional notches or steps, and traces of an old path, but with scanty available footing now. It was by this road that the Egyptian army entered Syria; and the masonry which I saw at the closure of two ravines, and the fort at the summit of the pass are probably the work of Ibraheem Pasha. Some, however, believed the fort to be ancient. It was here that we bade farewell to Wadee Araba; and wild beyond description was the scene.

After walking for three hours among the passes, I found the company seated under a tree, compelled to wait for the baggage-camels. After resting a considerable time, and then rising we were stopped by the Sheikh, and detained another half hour. So we ordered luncheon, to save time. It was only half-past ten: but we had set out very early.—Then we went on again, the Sheikh having borrowed a horse, and set Lady —— —— on his, paying her every attention, by way of propitiating the company. I think it was within an hour when I, being in advance of the other camel riders, came in view of a shrubby wadee, where Lady —— —— was sitting in the shade, and the Sheikh standing beside his spear, which was stuck in the ground, while his men were making fires. Here he meant to encamp: but I knew the gentlemen behind would not consent to stop so soon,—so necessary as it now was to push on to some place where food could be had for men and camels. Lady —— —— told me the old man was quite determined to stop: and he made signs to me to dismount, which I refused. He came to me, and made the camel lie down,—the animal unfortunately understanding Arabic better than English. I made it get up again, and rode back to tell the gentlemen what they would find. Mr. E. and others declared at once that we should on no account stop till four o'clock; and it was now only one. I asked to be ordered to move on; and on we went,—Mr. E. and I and a youth of the party. The Sheikh came in front of us; but we passed him with a civil greeting. He ordered the drivers to make our camels lie down: we made them get up again. The worst of it was that the animals were ready to take the least

hint about stopping. My camel lay down against my will thirteen times this day.—The Sheikh himself next caught hold of Mr. E.'s rein, and in the most insulting manner, brought his camel down on its knees. This was the only moment when I was really alarmed. It seemed too much to expect that Mr. E., with a stick in his hand, should not rap his knuckles. But I might have known our friend's prudence and fine temper better. He raised and turned his camel, and went on.

We agreed now that we were in for it. We had defied the Sheikh in the presence of his people, and taken on ourselves the conduct of the journey for the time. We conscientiously believed this to be necessary, in order to get on to Hebron within any reasonable time, and in any condition but that of starvation: but we agreed that we would bear in mind the mortification we had inflicted, and spare the old man's feelings in other matters as much as we could. On looking back, I saw that our comrades were following us; and soon Lady —— —— and the Sheikh appeared in the rear. Our dragoman was grave, and some of the Arabs evidently perplexed.

On we went, through a wadee, strewn with wild flowers,—we three in front, and Mr. F. riding not far behind,—when the Sheikh galloped past, stopped a-head, in the middle of the way, and waited with his spear, as if to bar our progress. We greeted him and rode by. He then tried his final manœuvre. He wheeled his horse at full gallop round and round us, coming nearer and nearer, till he almost closed upon Mr. E.; and when behind him, raised his spear with a theatrical air, and stuck it into Mr. E.'s camel under

the tail. I saw that it was so gently done that the animal would not be the worse; and this convinced me that the whole was a show, for the sake of intimidation. Mr. E. was so quiet, that I thought at first that he was not aware what was doing: but he turned on his seat with a look which said, as plainly as looks can speak, "O! that is the way you think to frighten me:" and rode on as before,—only bidding our young friend let his pistols alone. Both this youth and Mr. F. had recourse to their pistols in a moment: but there was no occasion for them. Mr. E.'s contempt had done the business. The old Sheikh sneaked off, completely crest-fallen, and dropped into the rear. The whole scene, which passed more quickly than I can describe it, was so ridiculous,—there was so much of stage effect about it,—that it made me laugh for an hour after. I might have recovered my gravity sooner, but the second Sheikh, Hasan, who had come up to see, and to help, I suppose, if necessary, was now walking near: and he seemed so utterly perplexed at my laughter that it set me off again. If I stopped for a moment, he came to the head of my camel, and peeped under my hat, with such an expression of perplexity and amazement in his face, that it made me burst forth again.

"And now," I said to Mr. E., "what will you do next?"

"It is now twenty minutes past two. We will ride on till four."—I begged for some little concession; and it was settled that we should stop at the next advantageous place after another hour.

The Sheikh two or three times cantered past us, planted his spear, and waited: and when he saw that

we did not attend to it, rode on again,—not coming near us, or using any threats. If I had not known that the Arabs, though they can occasionally talk about revenge, are not apt to bear malice, I should have felt rather uneasy; but there was no worse result than a confirmation of our Sheikh's conviction that Mr. E. was the greatest man in Europe. Our affairs with old Hussein certainly taught us that the display of force and imperiousness which we always hear of as necessary with the Arabs, is no more necessary with them than with any other people. Mr. E. did not show his arms, or look fierce, or talk big. He was fearless, steady, and good-tempered; and the old chief was as completely subdued as he could have been by any demonstration of physical force. Mr. E. had the thanks of our whole company for his moderation and firmness; and I consider it no small result of our adventures in the Desert that we have proof how manly goodness will avail with a tribe of people with whom it has hitherto been considered necessary to use force or the threat of it. The manliness is, however, indispensable. Reasonableness and amiability will not do without firm speech and fearless face.

We had the pleasure of entering upon a green wadee before we stopped to-day;—of riding over grass, however thin it might be,—and seeing by the wayside the purple iris, large and small, wild oats, daisies, buttercups, and abundance of the homely mallow. The whole ground might have been English, except for the fine scarlet anemones, which grew as plentifully as any other weed. We had sand-hills on the one hand, and stony hills on the other; and when we came to a

pleasant nook, partly sheltered from the wind (which blew strong,) and overspread with grass, Mr. E. dismounted. I was amused to see the Sheikh's celerity in striking his spear, and his emphasis in giving orders, as if it was he who had chosen the resting-place.

Four scorpions were found in two tents, as soon as they were pitched; and the number of black beetles under the stones was wonderful. There was a fort on a rising ground above us; and from that height, the flat-topped trees in the wadees looked picturesque. It was observable that they were of larger growth now, day by day; especially the thorny-acacia.

The dragomen expressed themselves glad that we had nearly done with Hussein's Arabs, who had been throughout the journey lazy, disobliging, and always wanting pay,—loading the camels badly, and spoiling the things, refusing to re-load what fell, and to get water, or render any service asked of them. For their rapacity they had the example of their chief: and their laziness might be partly excused on the score of weakness from hunger.

The Sheikh sought an interview this afternoon with Mr. E.; and he demanded the rest of his money. He was told he should have it at Hebron, and not before: whereupon he said he should draw off all his men and camels that night, and leave us in the Desert.—He was told that we could not prevent him, if he chose to do that: but that he had better consider the consequences: that we had a friend at Cairo in the Consul-general; and that if any harm happened to us, or to any British subject, through his means, the Pasha would take care that it should be very long indeed before he heard the

last of it. He repeated his threat very emphatically, and withdrew. We did not believe he would desert us: but, if he did, we imagined that some Arabs near would be happy to take his place, in order to get his money. The day before, a party of Bedoueens, armed and formidable looking, had appeared from behind the sand hills; and it seemed doubtful for a few minutes whether we were to have peace or war. But, after a conference, there was a prodigious kissing all round, and the strangers vanished. Still, the impression was conveyed to us that these men were not satisfied, the cause of their discontent being the same as in the former case; that Hussein was carrying us through their territory without paying tribute. There was reason to believe they were now not far off; and we thought it probable that they would be thankful to convey us to Hebron for Hussein's pay. There was no occasion to ask them, however. In the morning, there was Hussein, smoking away as grandly as ever!

This was the morning of Sunday, March 28th,—a memorable day in the history of our journey; for it was that of entering upon the Holy Land. It had been agreed over night that we should start early, and stop early, in order to have service. We were now about four hours from the frontier; and our faculties seemed sharpened to note every object that met our eyes on these outskirts of the most sacred region on the earth's surface. How well I remember what the scene was at six o'clock, when Mrs. Y. and I were walking in the early sun, on a spit of sand, to dry our feet, wet with the dewy grass which had been our carpet at breakfast! There we were comparing the

impressions of our childhood about the story of Jesus, and the emotions and passions that history had excited in us: and we saw, the while, the breaking up of the camp, and the leading forth of the camels which were soon to set us down on his native soil, and possibly near some of his haunts.—Our course was through thin pasture;—very thin, the ground being strewn with stones. The swelling hills bore some resemblance to the Scotch lowlands, but were more interrupted by water-courses. A few camels were grazing, and many flocks: a black encampment of Arabs was on a distant slope, and we met a woman here and there, leading the goats. To the east were the blue mountains which inclosed the Dead Sea. No one could tell the exact moment of crossing the frontier: but it was just after ten when we were assured that we had entered Palestine.

PART III.

PALESTINE AND ITS FAITH.

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."—*Ecclesiastes*, iii. 1.

"First the blade, then the ear; after that, the full corn in the ear."—*Mark*, iv. 28.

"Dans tout le monde connu, vers l'ère chrétienne, et dans toutes les classes éclairées ou vulgaires de ce monde, on sembla ressentir au même instant le besoin de s'en remettre à un nouvel ordre d'idées, qui aurait pour première loi de s'addresser aux âmes beaucoup plus encore qu'aux esprits épuisés; de rompre toutes les barrières religieuses établies entre les initiés et les profanes, et de dissiper de fond en comble, comme l'honneur en a appartenu au christianisme, un agrégation tumultueuse de déesses et de dieux qui ne laissaient privés de leur exemples et de leur protection aucun genre d'absurdités ni de vices."—*Jésus Christ et sa Doctrine.—Salvador*, i. p. 67.

"And here we cannot but by the way take notice of that famous and remarkable story of Plutarch's in his DEFECT OF ORACLES, concerning demons lamenting the death of the great PAN. In the time of Tiberius (saith he) certain persons embarking from Asia for Italy, towards the evening sailed by the Echinades, where, being becalmed, they heard from thence a loud voice calling one Thamous, an Egyptian mariner amongst them, and after the third time commanding him, when he came to the Palodes, to declare that THE GREAT PAN WAS DEAD."—*Cudworth.—Intellectual System*, I. ch. iv. p. 345.

PALESTINE AND ITS FAITH.

CHAPTER I.

ENTRANCE UPON THE HOLY LAND.—HEBRON.—BETHLEHEM.

THE first thought or impression which I remember as occurring on my entrance into the Holy Land was one of pleasure that it was so like home. When we came to towns, everything looked as foreign as in Nubia: but here, on the open hills, we might gaze round us on a multitude of familiar objects, and remember to whose eyes they were once familiar too. Never were the rarest and most glorious flowers so delightful to my eyes as the weeds I was looking at all this day;—the weeds of our hedges and ditches and fields; for I knew that in his childhood He must have played among them; and that in his manhood, he must have been daily familiar with them. If his family and that of John were related, and if the family of John lived at Hebron, the probability is strong that Jesus may have been in the very district through which we travelled this day. So general as were the habits of travel among the Hebrews, and so

often as the men had to come up to Jerusalem to the feasts, it is scarcely likely that relatives should not visit each other when so near as Jerusalem is to Hebron. So I already saw that vision which never afterwards left me while in Palestine,—of One walking under the terraced hills, or drinking at the wells, or resting under the shade of the olives: and it was truly a delight to think that besides the palm and the oleander and the prickly pear, he knew, as well as we do, the poppy and the wild rose, the cyclamen, the bindweed, the various grasses of the way-side, and the familiar thorn. This, and the new and astonishing sense of the familiarity of his teachings,—a thing which we declare and protest about at home, but can never adequately feel, — brought me nearer to an insight and understanding of what I had known by heart from my infancy, than perhaps any one can conceive who has not tracked his actual footsteps. But it is too soon to enter on this now.

We entered Palestine at the close of the rainy season, which ordinarily ends with March. A few drops of rain fell to-day, and the wind was cold. In about an hour from the frontier, we came upon a meagre bit of ploughing;—the first cultivation we had seen for some weeks. Then there was more, on a better soil, and some cross-ploughing, with a rude antique-looking plough, and a camel. The soil was reddish, and much encumbered with stones. The myriads of little locusts, or grasshoppers, which swarmed for miles, were beyond belief. They lay, like clusters of bees, on the grass, covering it for large spaces; and they filled the air, for about a foot above the ground, by jumping as we

passed. I may safely say I never saw so many living creatures in the same space before; for it seems to me that the gnats and frogs in an American swamp are not to be compared to these brown locusts for multitude.

We encamped about three o'clock, at a distance of four or five hours from Hebron. The place chosen was a level plot of weedy and stony ground among the hills which we were to cross in the morning. It was high ground, as we found by the cold: and it was not thought very safe, as we learned by the rumours of wild Bedoueens.—After service, some of the gentlemen explored the site, and were reasonably convinced that a town of considerable size had stood here. We had already passed one, called now El Arat, supposed to be the Aroer of Scripture; of which there remains a large building on a height, two standing columns, and mounds of stones. Here already was another: and for some days to come we were to be more and more impressed with wonder at the magnitude and number of the remains we had to pass. Nothing that I have seen in other countries gives an idea of such a thickly settled territory as this part of Palestine must once have been. From the frontier to Jerusalem, the towns must have been in sight of one another, I should think, all the way; and in some places, many must have been in view at once. And such fine-looking places too! No brick,—no mud,—no mere piles of rough stones from the hill sides: but square houses of hewn stone, with flat roofs, rising in tiers on the slope of a hill, or crowning its summit, or set within an angle of the terraced heights.

The remains round our encampment consisted of long lines of foundations, and numberless inclosure walls, almost razed to the ground; and the overthrown columns of three edifices; and the orifice of a substantially built well, with a hole in the rim, into which the pin of the covering-stone no doubt once fitted. There were caverns in the limestone rock, under some of the overthrown edifices. These caverns were once their vaults, but are now used to bed the goats. Such a site was the very place for scorpions; and two were immediately found.

All the next day we continually saw gaping wells beside our path, and under every angle of the hills where they were likely to be kept filled. They were not now carefully covered, with a stone so massive as that the daughters of the patriarchs could not roll it away:—the country is too scantily peopled now for such care: but we could still see turbaned men sitting beside the opening; and cattle crowding, and sheep and goats led to it.—Our way at first to-day lay over the hills where there were no visible tracks. These hill sides were very stony; but they also abounded in shrubs and grass and weeds, whereon hung the pearly dew-drops which look so beautiful to those who come here by way of the Desert. It was all very like home,—like the wilder parts of England, except for our Arab train, and the talk about wild Bedoueens, for whom our scouts were carefully on the look-out.

This reminds me of a little adventure of this day which is not down in my journal, but which I clearly remember, from a certain novelty of sensation which attended it. The face-ache which I had had almost

from the day I left Cairo, had now increased to a degree which was really terrible. This morning it was worse than ever; and I dismounted, partly from the restlessness of pain, and partly because I thought exercise might act as a counter-irritant. I was advised to try smoking; and I found great relief for a short time. My own party passed me while I was looking better from this cause, and were therefore not anxious about me. But before half the long train had gone by, the pain came back; and when Alee and the baggage camels passed, I could neither speak nor make a sign. I sank down on the wet ground fainting, just after the last had gone by. Still the rear-guard were to come. They passed without seeming to heed me. I was on sloping high ground which happened to command the bases of the hills for about a mile; and with my dizzy sight I could see, opening my eyes from time to time, when the first of the troop went out of sight, and when half were gone, and, at length, when the last disappeared. Here I was alone indeed, on the hills of Judea. I did not expect to be long alone; for I supposed that the wild Bedoueens would pounce upon me immediately: but I was too weak to feel frightened. I tried to rise several times; but I could not stand. I do not know exactly how long it was, but it must have been a considerable time, before two armed Arabs came up, shouting, and running from different directions. They were of our escort. They had seen me in passing, and had run on for my camel, which presently appeared. They lifted me on; but it was still some time before we could make any way. At last, I saw what encouraged me to an effort; though indeed I had every motive

before in the danger I knew my poor Arabs to be in, so far from their comrades: but now there was hope in view. One of the gentlemen had stopped to arrange his gun: and he and his dragoman and driver were dismounted, within half a mile of us. In a little while, he had sent on for brandy, and made my camel kneel till I should be more fit to proceed. And then, of course, up came my kind friends, who could hardly be persuaded that it was nobody's fault. I felt throughout that I should be missed at lunch, and hardly before; for, in a caravan like ours, everybody is supposed to be somewhere in the train; and my friends were aware that I thought them more watchful over me than was at all necessary. As it was, I know better than any of them what it is to be alone on the wild hills of Judea.

About two hours short of Hebron, the shrubs congregated into thickets about our path, and we had white briar roses dancing on the sprays. Here the beautiful cyclamen began to peep out from under gnarled roots of old trees, or stones, or bunches of moss. From place to place, I henceforth saw this delicate and graceful flower, till we left the skirts of Lebanon for the shore of the Mediterranean. I was presently surprised to see Mr. E. promoted downwards from his camel to riding the Sheikh's horse. He told me that he had declined it repeatedly, but that "some men have greatness thrust upon them," and he found it best to accept his at last. This was our final day with Hussein. He was to be paid off in the evening; and this was his way, we supposed, of making up matters before parting with the greatest man in Europe.

We had now begun to observe that cleared fields,

fenced with stone walls, were on our left hand. The ploughed fields had a deep yellow soil. And soon came vineyards and olive-grounds, where the shadows of the spreading trees were cast on a soil of deep red. The vines appeared very old; but we liked the Hebron wine which we afterwards tasted. In almost every vineyard was a tower, built of the stones which lay about;—a place for the watchman and the tools, I believe. And here we were already among those natural commentaries on the Gospel which we henceforth met with from day to day. Here, before us, men had "digged a wine-press, and built a tower."

But on this spot the mind of the gazer is or ought to be carried back far beyond the time when there began to be vineyards here at all; to the time when the whole of this expanse of country was pasture land, and the flocks were on the hills, and the herdsmen, abiding in the field by night, worshipped the stars. Here, in those days, was that worship of the Sun whose traces we were to meet with throughout the rest of our journey. Here, upon the plain of Mamre, nothing was more natural than such worship to men who, living in tents in wide pasture lands, with the brilliant sky of the East overhead, saw sun and moon daily rise behind the mountains of Moab, and go down towards the sea, to let the dews descend and freshen the grass of the pastures. Here it was that these Sun-worshippers found among them the tents of a mighty prince* who did not worship sun or star. Here it was that Abraham fed his flocks both before and after his visit to Egypt. Here, as he sat under the terebinth tree,

* Genesis, XXIII. 6.

in the plain, he could tell neighbour and guest of those wonderful works of Egyptian art of which we could now have told in the same place. Here he could astonish the shepherds of Mamre with descriptions of the marvels, and hints of the mysteries of the Pyramids: and with an account of the honours with which he had been treated at Memphis. Here it was that Sara died; and within view of where we now stood was the field leading up to a hill, wherein was a cave in which Abraham wished to bury his dead. There was the hill now, before us, with the cave in the midst of it, where the patriarch himself was afterwards laid.

Then, after several generations, other herdsmen came hither, who could tell more of Egypt than even Abraham. Hither came the sons of the generation who had come out of bondage. Years ago they had buried Miriam, not far to the south of this place: then they had seen Aaron go up Mount Hor to die: and now lately, Moses had disappeared from their eyes. They had not yet fulfilled the desire of Moses by becoming a nation,—a people with One God and a single faith. They were so little united yet by any national spirit as to be prepared for the cruel civil wars which took place as soon as they obtained arms; that is, under the Judges, presently after. Meantime, here they were, permitted by the Philistines to pasture their flocks, and learning the while, something of the arts of war and of civil life from the neighbours whom they hated and despised as unclean, because uncircumcised; —the only uncircumcised people within their knowledge.

Then again, some generations later, after the barbarian wars of the times of the Judges, during which

the institutions of Moses appear to have been completely lost sight of, and the worship of Jehovah to have been only one item in a wide idolatry,—during which, in the historical language, "every man did that which was right in his own eyes;"—immediately after that dark time, three women passed this way,—unless Orpah had already turned back to yonder mountains, where her old home lay. Here at least passed old Naomi and Ruth; and greatly astonished would Ruth have been to be told that she was to be the great-grandmother of a king who should be crowned in the city then before her eyes; a king who should so sing as that the human race should echo his strains through all future time; and who should take the strong rock-fort of Jebus, some way to the north, and make of it a city so holy, as that its very name should be music for ever. Little did the gentle Ruth think of these things when she and Naomi passed this way.

Whether the greatest man, after Moses, in all Israel, Samuel, was ever here, I believe we are not told: but, as he lived in Ramah, and journeyed much, it is probable that he was. He, too, like Moses, was disappointed in his wisest wishes for this people; and he, like Moses, appears to have overrated their moral capacities. The people would have a king, and a very bad one. Here their second king was crowned, not as sovereign of Israel, but, as yet, of Judah only. Here the limited dignity was given, and here David lived for seven years and a half before he took the oath which made him king of all Israel. Hebron would not longer serve for his residence, as it was necessary for him to live where he could communicate easily with other parts

of his dominion, and especially where he could command the valley of the Jordan: he therefore took the rock-fort of Jebus, and fixed his abode upon Zion, whose praises he thenceforth celebrated as never city was celebrated by mortal man. Six of David's sons were born in Hebron. Of these, Solomon was not one, he being the son of Bathsheba whom, as we all know, David took to wife at Jerusalem; but two of the six were Absolom, who here declared his rebellion, and Adonijah, who assumed the government while David lay dying, in order to exclude Solomon, the favoured son of Bathsheba. From the time of David's removal to Jerusalem, we hear little more of Hebron, except as one in the list of fortified cities. Once upon a time, however, the Idumæans came up from Petra, and took it; and it was theirs till Judas Maccabæus drove them out. If this was the city "in the hill country in Judea" where the Baptist was born and reared, this is a strong interest connected with the place, and the latest, except for those who like to follow the career of the Crusaders.

I little thought ever to have felt any touch of the crusading spirit: but I was surprised by an impulse of it, on turning the shoulder of the hill which had hidden Hebron from us. The town looked very pretty, sloping down in the sun, on the two eminences on which it is built: but the most conspicuous thing in it is the mosque which covers the Cave of Machpelah. It was not the thought of this burial-place of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob which gave me a momentary ill-will to the Mohammedans. It was the thought of the devout John, who had for a disciple, for a time, a greater than himself. I was presently ashamed of the absurd and illiberal emotion;

and, as I looked upon the minaret, felt that the Mohammedans had as much right to build over sacred places as the Empress Helena: though one must heartily wish they had all let it alone.—As soon as we thus came in view of the town, we sat down on the hill side, to rest and refresh ourselves, sending on the baggage, that our tents might be pitched on the quarantine ground, south of the town, in readiness for us.

We found our tents pitched on thick short grass, with the tombs of the Turkish cemetery behind us, and the town in full view in front. On the green, a company of Turkish soldiers was exercising. They looked mean,—one might say vulgar, in their European blue uniform: but the gentlemen said they went through their business very well.

There was time to look about us, before thinking of Hebron; for there must be a negociation first with the Governor and the Doctor about our obtaining immediate pratique. While the tiresome dispute was proceeding, I sat at the tent door, much amused at the delight of our servants in buying fresh bread, oranges, wine, &c., after our long absence from all markets. The idlers who hung about us were a very handsome set of people: and in the town, we were yet more struck with the beauty of those we passed. There was something cheerful in meeting the women with faces uncovered, after the dark, dismal veiling we had been accustomed to so long. Among all the Jews we saw, I observed only one who had what we call the Jewish cast of countenance. Here, and at Jerusalem and elsewhere, we saw many Jews with fair complexions, blue eyes, and light hair. Such eyes I never saw, as both the blue

and the brown; soft, large, noble eyes, such as bring tears into one's own, one knows not why. The form of the face was usually fine, and the complexions clear brown or fair:—the hair beautiful. The drawback was the frequency of scrofulous disease among them, which I observed particularly at Jerusalem. We went to the synagogue at Hebron, through the winding alleys of the Jew quarter. The Chief Rabbi being absent, we could not see the valuable MSS. said to be laid up here: but we saw one pretty sight, in the beautiful children who were at school in the synagogue. They were very few,—not more, I think, than ten or twelve; and the building was small and mean. We looked into the house of the Chief Rabbi, being invited in by his cheerful, hospitable wife, who wished us to stay for coffee. We would not put her to this trouble: but presently we met her venerable husband; and he pressed us all to go in and dine!—a party which would have filled his house! He was a grey-bearded, picturesque-looking old man. Next, we were conducted to a glass-house,—of all odd places to see in Hebron! I would recommend a Newcastle one in preference, as there the glass is not greenish and thin, and the articles made can stand upright. We thought here as before, however, that the Arabs are expert enough at manual arts, if they had fair play with tools and material.

The most interesting object in Hebron, the tombs of the Patriarchs, are of course inaccessible to Christians. Neither Jew nor Christian is permitted to set foot within the mosque. We walked nearly round it, and caught a view of the long flight of steps inside. We saw also the cistern where the worshippers wash;

and that was all. It is believed that the Faithful themselves are not permitted to enter the Cave of Machpelah. Above the cave, a small mosque is built: and the mosque stands in a court, which is surrounded by the great circuit wall under which we walked. This massive stone wall is fifty or sixty feet high, and extends for about two hundred feet in length. It is needless to say that it effectually prevented our seeing anything beyond itself.

In returning to the tents, we passed the two pools, believed to be very ancient, from which the town draws its whole supply of water. These pools are filled by the rain merely: and one of them was very weedy and foul when we saw it. The other was clear. They are large and deep: the larger measuring, according to Dr. Robinson,* one hundred and thirty-three feet square, with a depth of nearly twenty-two feet. One of these is called the King's Pool, and is, according to tradition, the pool mentioned 2 Sam. iv. 12, as the scene of a horrible execution in David's time.

It was so cold this evening that we were glad of a charcoal fire in our tent. The Sheikh perceived this to be a good time for extorting money, by interfering with a lady's shelter for the night. He did not meddle with Mr. E., having had enough of him. He took his money very quietly; and we congratulated Mr. E. on having done with him. But an urgent message came from two of the clergymen, begging Mr. E. to come and help them to get rid of the Sheikh. We thought our friend had already had too much put upon him, and saw no occasion for his being mixed up with

* Biblical Researches, II. 432.

further quarrels, when he had finished the general business; and we dissuaded him from going. A second message came, however, so urgent as to summon him; and there he found the Sheikh, pulling down the tent from over the heads of these gentlemen and the sister of one of them. He was going to seize both their tents, if they did not immediately pay some absurd demand which he had imagined for the occasion. Mr. E. obtained only an abatement of forty-four piastres: and the rest was paid at once, to enable the lady to go to rest.—In the morning, the Sheikh requested permission, and certainly with genuine anxiety, to shake hands with Mr. E. This was refused: and all that he could obtain by humble and persevering supplication, was permission to touch Mr. E.'s hand. He finally asked for a testimonial letter; but was told that he had better say nothing about it, as we could report little favourable to him: whereupon he gave us such a salutation as we should have looked for if he had obtained what he wished. Mrs. Y. and I watched from the cemetery the process,—most tumultuous to-day,—of loading and setting off the camels on their return. They were delayed by the discovery of the theft of a pistol from one of the tents. The Governor was sent for; and he ordained that the Sheikh should deduct the value of the pistol from his final pay; and this was done; and Sheikh Hussein and his train rode away. I have mentioned what adventure befel him on his return.

We had twenty miles to ride to-day,—to Bethlehem. When the horses were all appropriated, there remained some donkeys for the rest of us: and I had the smallest

that I ever mounted. After so many weeks on a camel, this was like riding a rat. But there was no fatigue in it, when we had once passed the very bad paved road near Hebron; and the country was beautiful. The scenery was of the same character as yesterday;—stony hills, tufted with shrubs; fields of a deep yellow or red soil, ploughed to-day with bullocks; many pools and picturesque old wells, sunk and weed-grown: but the trees were larger, the shrubs finer, and the wild flowers gayer and more profuse. None were more abundant than the cyclamen.

We forgot the tree of Abraham till we had passed the way to it too far to return; and we were not much concerned at it,—hardly supposing that the tree under which the Patriarch received the three visitants can be visible now. Two gentlemen of the company had gone; and we proposed to be content with their report. We lunched under a spreading tree, in the shadow of a rock; and as we threw our egg-shells about, little imagined what comfort we were providing for our two comrades in the rear. One of them was on foot; so that both were at the mercy of the country people. Their guide played them false; they were threatened and assailed, and had to fight and find their way as well as they could. While in some uncertainty, they arrived at this resting-place, saw our egg-shells, and knew that they were in the right road. The walker was dreadfully exhausted when they joined us at Bethlehem in the evening.

We met a company of pilgrims this morning,—very like the group in Eastlake's picture, only that they were leaving the Holy City, instead of hastening to it.

There were more women than men; and they were very good-looking; less travel-worn than could have been expected, after a pilgrimage first to Mekkeh, and then to Jerusalem. They were now on their way home; some few on horses and asses, but the greater number on foot: perhaps five-and-twenty in all.—A little further on we came to a large khan, with a vast reservoir; the resting-place of the pilgrims who come this way, and the watering-place of their beasts.

At the end of twenty miles from Hebron, we came upon a very fine view. On the ridge of a hill before us rose the convent of St. Elias, which we knew to be almost within sight of Jerusalem. A valley lay on our left hand, from which sloped hills whose recesses were wooded with olive groves. High up one of these hills, and in the midst of the olive groves, was a village,—one of the handsome stone-built villages of Palestine, on which the setting sun was now casting its last golden gleam. To our right lay Bethlehem. To our right we turned; for news met us at this corner that we could be lodged in the Latin convent at Bethlehem. We descended through the narrow streets of the village, and passed along the road, half-way up the rocks, to the convent, which stands on a point nobly commanding the eastern plain, as far as the hills which inclose the Dead Sea. It was too dusk now to see much of this; and we left all research till the morning.—We were kindly received by the friars, and had good rooms and thoroughly clean beds. There was no annoyance whatever but gnats. The moon shone in splendidly all night: a great blessing to me; for I was not yet sufficiently at ease to sleep. I have a pleasant recollection

of that night, however,—the moon shining full in at the high window, and showing me the ample spaces of that lofty and large apartment; and the certainty being before me of seeing to-morrow the fields where Ruth gleaned among the maidens of Boaz, and the pastures where a shepherd-boy once tended his father's flocks,—now seeking smooth stones for his sling among the brooks, and now delighting himself with that young song which was to grow divine, and to become the worship of future ages and nations,—in the islands of the Southern ocean, and the cathedrals of Europe, and among the forests of the western world. It was strange to think what the Psalms of David have become, and then to remember that in the morning we should see the very valleys and hill-sides where he led his sheep, and tried his young voice, with the echoes for his chorus.

On that morrow (Wednesday, March 31st) we had these anticipated pleasures,—of seeing the face of the country where Ruth and her descendant David were out in the fields; but we now began to experience that pain,—so much greater than can be anticipated,—to one's cherished associations, which is the birth of superstition at home and on the spot. We hear much complaint from travellers of their pain from the superstition on the spot; but little or nothing of the perplexity or disturbance from the superstition they have left behind or brought with them. The superstition I refer to is the worship of the Letter of the Bible, to the sacrifice of its spirit. As to the comfort and pleasure of the traveller in the Holy Land, it may truly be said that "the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive."

I had opportunity to see the difference between those who were in bondage and those who were free. One of the best things that Coleridge ever said was that our idolatry would be succeeded by bibliolatry. When I saw abroad, as I continually see at home, the curse of this bibliolatry, I thought it hard to say which was the worst of the two. In idolatry, Christian or pagan, there is always some true idea involved, however much corruption may be associated with it: but in the awful error of mistaking the Records of the origin of Judaism and Christianity for the messages themselves, there seems no redeeming consideration. The error of bibliolatry is the more gratuitous of the two. There is no declaration in the Records themselves that they are anything more than records: and if the writers could have foreknown that the hearts and minds which ought to be occupied with the history and the doctrine would be enslaved by a timid and superstitious regard to the wording of the records, they would have been as much shocked at the anticipation as any of us can be at the sight of it.—We all know, as well as Coleridge did, that this is only a temporary form of an evil which took other shapes before, and will take other shapes again. We know that there was far more freedom of religious imagination, reason, argument, and, I may say, knowledge among our Protestant divines a century ago than there is now. This corruption of bibliolatry has so increased upon us, our faithless and irreverent timidity has so grown upon us, even in that time, that it would be an act of great courage in divines of our day to publish what divines of a century ago were honoured for publishing. It is difficult now for philosophers to

make known,—in England, for the incubus presses chiefly there,—what can be proved to be scientifically true, in geology and some other directions; and it is much more difficult for philosophers and scholars to make known what can be proved to be historically true or false. Of course, our generation loses terribly by this, both in knowledge and in health of mind. But the evil will pass: and, though it is to be feared that it will only pass into some new form of idol homage, we will hope that men may ere long lift up their heads, and use their powers freely, as those should do who believe themselves sons of God, and heirs of Christian liberty, and not slaves or infants under the bondage of the Law or the Letter.

No one at home could feel all this more strongly than I did before I went to the East: and I think no one who has felt it at home can help being full of sorrow and pity there for those who go through the scenes of Palestine with the timid heart, and narrow, anxious mind of superstition. Instead of "looking before and after," and around them in the broad light of historical and philosophical knowledge, which would reveal to them the origin and sympathy and intermingling of the faiths of men, so that each may go some way in the interpretation of the rest;—instead of having so familiarised themselves with the wants and tendencies of men as to recognise in successive faiths what is derived and what is original;—instead of being warned that any faith becomes corrupted within a certain length of time by the very zeal of its holders; instead of having the power of setting themselves back to the time when Christ lived and spoke, so as to see and hear him

as if he lived and spoke at this day, our travellers may be seen,—even clergymen of the Church of England,—getting leave from the Bishop of Jerusalem to carry wax candles in Passion Week in the processions in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and making obeisances to the priests, candle in hand. Travellers may be observed throughout doing one of two things;—overlooking, more or less consciously,—the incompatibilities of the Scriptural narrative,—the absolute contradictions which can by no means be reconciled; or so fastening their whole attention upon one narration, to the exclusion of the parallel ones, as to escape the necessity of the recognition of variance. I met with one devout pilgrim who was actually unaware of any incompatibilities in the different narratives of the birth and infancy of Jesus; and who declared, previous to inquiry, that there could be none, because—not the facts or doctrine—but the narrative was the Word of God! I saw repeated instances of a grovelling superstition, a formal observance of days and places, which made me wonder whether, if the groves and altars of Baal and Ashtaroth had now been standing in their old places, there would have been much to choose between such homage paid to them and to the actual holy sites of Palestine.—How different is the truer reverence of those who go enlightened by knowledge, and animated by a higher faith!—who believe that the history of man is truly the Word of God: and that the reason why the gospel is especially called so is because those Glad Tidings are the most important event in the history of man. How infinitely venerable to them are the great religious Ideas which they know to have

been the guiding lights of men from the remotest past, and which Christ presented anew, purified and expanded! What an exquisite pleasure it is to stand where Jesus stood, and look around upon the old faiths and sectarian tenets of the world, and bring forth from them all a faith and hope which should, notwithstanding dreadful corruptions, elevate mankind through many future ages!—to have insight into the sacred mysteries of Egypt, and the national theology and Law of Sinai, and the ritual morality of the Pharisees, and the philosophical scepticism of the Sadducees, and the pure and peaceable and unworldly aspirations of the Essenes, and to see how from all these together come the ideas, and from the unseen world the spirit, of the religion which Jesus taught! While the devotee looks for traces of his footsteps, the disciple finds everywhere traces of his spirit. While the devotee listens timidly to traditions, the disciple hears everywhere the echoes of his living voice. While the devotee pores over the text of the narrative, not daring even to bring parts to bear on each other, which may throw light on the whole, the loving disciple so opens his entire mind and heart as to perceive the Holy One with all his powers; —with his understanding receiving the doctrine,—with his hope accepting the promises,—with his conscience adoring the spirituality,—and with his imagination accompanying the Teacher in all his haunts,—in the wilderness, and in the Temple courts, and by the shores of the Lake. On the spot, one hardly believes that it can be the same faith that takes one man through the land, holy guide-book in hand, with the timid, tentative gait of the devotee, and another man,

confiding in his guiding instincts, with the free, joyous step of the disciple who has found his Lord.

As for the superstition of the region,—the Christian superstition,—I need say nothing in advance of the pain which it causes. The merest mention of what was shown to us is enough. I do not think that travellers can be right in avoiding the Christian establishments in Palestine. The spectacle answers the same purpose as the reading of the Spurious Gospels. The spectacle and the reading are both painful; but they are very useful and enlightening, and stimulate to a great deal of wholesome thought. Feeling thus, I saw everything that any one offered to show me,—except the mummeries of Easter Week in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. From that exhibition I did shrink; and I staid at home while two English clergymen and a lady were carrying wax-candles in the way I mentioned.—At Bethlehem was our introduction to the monkish sights of Palestine.

In the morning, a friar showed us the church, built, as every one knows, over the cave of the Nativity. It is a handsome church, with departments for Greek, Latin and Armenian worship.—The crypt could not be entered then, as mass was going on:—and curious was the effect, as seen from the entrance of the grotto, of the chaunting congregation crowded into a subterranean cave, all yellow light, and smoke, and closeness. It was in these underground places that St. Jerome lived and wrote: and this was a real interest belonging to the place.—When we returned to the crypt, after mass, we saw the silver star which is laid in the pavement in the precise spot of the supposed birth of Jesus;

and the recess where Joseph waited for the news, and the corner where a marble manger has replaced the original one; (for even the friars did not pretend that this was the original manger:) and the place where the Magi presented their offerings: and, at some distance, the cave where the Virgin lived for some days after her recovery, and where, her milk becoming deficient, she mixed the lime of the sides with water, and so by drinking it, obtained a supply; and then other caves where she had lived.—As to these grottoes which are supposed to have been the scene of most of the sacred events, Maundrell has some remarks which may suffice, once for all.

"I cannot forbear to mention in this place," says Maundrell, "an observation which is very obvious to all who visit the Holy Land, viz., that almost all passages and histories related in the gospels are represented by them that undertake to show where everything was done, as having been done most of them in grottoes; and that, even in such cases where the condition and circumstances of the actions themselves seem to require places of another nature. Thus, if you would see the place where St. Anne was delivered of the blessed Virgin, you are carried to a grotto; if the place of the Annunciation, it is also a grotto; if the place where the blessed Virgin saluted Elizabeth; if that of the Baptist's or our Saviour's Nativity; if that of the agony, or that of St. Peter's repentance, or that where the Apostles made the creed, or this of the Transfiguration; all these places are also grottoes. And, in a word, wherever you go, you find almost everything is represented as done underground. Certainly, grottoes

were anciently held in great esteem, or else they could never have been assigned, in spite of all probability, for the places in which were done so many various actions. Perhaps it was the hermit-way of living in grottoes, from the fifth century downwards, that has brought them ever since to be in so great reputation."—That this hermit-way of living is the antecedent of the fact, there can be little doubt: but the practice and the fact certainly existed before the time of the Empress Helena, for she was shown holy grottoes, just as we were.—Of course, the Innocents were buried in grottoes too. We were shown in this crypt, an altar under which some of them were laid.

When we went to look abroad from the convent garden, we were beset by Bethlehemites asking alms, or offering for sale mother-of-pearl shells, carved with Nativity subjects; and bowls, inkstands, &c., made of some black substance which the people declared to be the hardened mud of the Jordan.—When we escaped from these people, it was very interesting to look out over the valley, so familiar to Ruth and David: and there was one spot, under the eastern hill, an inclosure planted with olives, which the friars declared to be the field where the shepherds were abiding when they heard the announcement of "peace on earth, and good will to men."

The friars are cheerful, kind-hearted people. We saw them giving dinner to the boys of the convent, who were merrily enjoying an abundant meal.—We left them some time before noon, to proceed first to the Convent of St. Elias, on the hill before us. We passed the tomb of Rachel, and entered the Convent of

St. Elias, where there was nothing to see but the ordinary decorated altar, with the ordinary wretched pictures over it;—in this case, of Elijah and Elisha.—Outside, however, there was something really interesting. Looking eastwards, we caught our first view of the Dead Sea, whose blue waters showed themselves in an interval of the hills.

Soon after, we saw, on the opposite northern ridge, a line of walls which looked so insignificant that some of our company were unaware at first what it was. Mr. E. said to me, "You know that is Jerusalem." I was not disappointed, as some were; for I knew that the most imposing first view was from the north, and the least from the south. Still, it was now a mere line of wall: and next, only a single dome appeared above it. But presently, when we could overlook the valley which lay between us and it, it became very striking; and soon, it exceeded all my expectations. The depth and steepness of Mount Zion now appeared; and it was not wonderful that the people of Jebus sent that scornful message to king David,* that their lame and blind should defend their fort against him. Next, we were struck with the depth of the ravines of Siloam and Hinnom, and their clustering red rocks; and then, there was the long vast slope of Olivet beyond. From the valley, we ascended a winding, steep, rocky road, which was to lead us in by the Jaffa gate. I was on foot, and lagged behind, that I might not lose by disturbance any feature of the scene. But I believe no one spoke. We all felt that it was such a moment as we should never know again. The black cupola of the

* 2 Samuel, V. 6. 8.

tomb of David was conspicuous; and above all, the great dome and surrounding buildings of the Mosque of Omar, crowning the summit of Moriah, where ancient pilgrims used to see the glittering roof of the Temple. The hill of Moriah is so much lower than Zion as to surprise those who had read that there was once a height of 480 feet from the Temple walls to Kedron running below: a visible proof, if true, of the loftiness of Mount Zion. Of course, the Valley of Jehoshaphat, with Kedron in its depths, was hidden from us by the intervening city and heights: but we saw more and more of Olivet, swelling up and away beyond the city and the ravines. The convent of the Ascension was conspicuous on its summit: and lower down, the chapel on the spot where Jesus sat when he uttered the doom of the city.

We entered by the Jaffa gate, and wound through steep, narrow, ill-paved streets, where the echo of the horses' feet between the high walls struck upon the ear, through all the beating of the heart which told us that we were in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER II.

ELEMENTS OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE HEBREWS AT THE TIME OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

Before going in search of the haunts of Jesus, it seems to me desirable to review, however slightly, the progress which religion had made since the great events which dated from Sinai. This is necessary in giving a faithful account of my travels, because I found it indispensable on the spot to the true understanding of my journey. In order to see the scene of the life of Jesus at all with his eyes, it was necessary to understand, as far as possible, his knowledge and his views: and in order to understand these, it was indispensable to consider what were the elements of the religious life of the time. If I could convey any idea of the advantage, in this point of view, of studying, first Egypt, and then the Sinai peninsula, instead of going straight from the theological atmosphere of home into the sacred places of Palestine, I cannot but think that much irreverent dogmatism, and much idolatrous superstition would be recognised for what they are, and would give place to ideas and a temper more befitting the disciples of Jesus. We all know something of the beneficent power of knowledge at home, though our knowledge there can be derived only from books.

We all know, in ourselves, or by observation of others, how entirely superstitious, and therefore how nearly worthless is our religion, as long as we ignorantly suppose that all the events and arrangements narrated in the Bible are perfectly singular: a state of things ordained, down to the minutest particulars, for the sake of the "peculiar people," and in no respects paralleled elsewhere: and then, how the value of our faith rises, and our character of mind rises with it, when divines worthy of their office, and other learned instructors show us how the religion arose, and passed "from strength to strength," among circumstances and arrangements which were common to all men of the time and region. When it opens upon the young student that a part of the earliest traditions in Genesis are of Eyptian origin; and that the convenant of circumcision was not with Abraham alone, but that the rite was practised from a time unknown by all the Orientals, excepting only the Philistines; and that though the Law originated with Moses, after an Egyptian model, and therefore bore his name, it was, in its full extent, the work of many centuries; and that the books, commonly called of Moses, were therefore not written by him, nor ever asserted or assumed in early days to be so, whatever amount of the material of them might have been furnished by him; and that the calf-idol, and the sacrifices, and feast-days, and the structure of the tabernacle, were of Egyptian derivation; and that the practice of carrying a tabernacle was not peculiar to the Hebrews, and so on: — when the young student learns these things from religious scholars and their works at home, he finds, if he be ingenuous, a

strong light cast upon his faith, as well as an immense relief afforded to his religious affections. He is set free from perplexity and superstition about the apparatus employed in the conveyance of religious ideas, and he is at liberty for the contemplation of the ideas themselves, and for admiration of the process by which the loftiest and holiest influences which have operated on the human race have issued from the ordinary circumstances and habitudes of life. For one instance, he honours Moses infinitely more for having transcended "the wisdom of the Egyptians," and dared to lay open their mysteries, while employing for his purposes the religious associations which the Hebrews had derived from them, than if it had been true, as the ignorant naturally and perniciously suppose, that the apparatus and external arrangements were as essential a part of the Mosaic religion as the doctrine that Jehovah was the sole God of the Hebrews. Apart from the apparatus, and only passing through the ritual to the minds of the people, how sublime is the doctrine! But how it sinks when it is supposed to be given on the same terms with devices about the red heifer and the shew-bread, and the priests' garments, and the fringes and rings of the tabernacle!

In the same manner, but in an immeasurably higher degree, is the progressive faith of the Hebrews, and that of the first Christians, enhanced by the lights which travel concentrates upon the spot of their origin and expansion. Books of Biblical scholarship,—those which are the work of free and enlightened and earnest minds,—are a great blessing at home;—the greatest, except the Book itself: and, moreover, they are an indispensable

preparative for the benefits of travel: but, as instructors, how low they sink while one is contemplating an Egyptian tomb, or looking abroad from the heights of Horeb! The monumental volumes of Egypt teach in a day what can never be learned in libraries at home: and in the Desert, "Truth springs out of the earth, and righteousness looks down from the heaven" which overhangs Sinai. And these lights accumulated as we went; and we found what it was to carry our Egyptian associations into the Desert; and thence, enriched again by the fruits of the Wandering, into Palestine. As, in Palestine, our main interest is its being the abode of Jesus, I gave comparatively little attention to any mere localities of more ancient events, but endeavoured to carry clearly in my mind the religious history of the Hebrews up to the time of Christ, in order to a better understanding of his own, and a more thorough realisation of his presence in the haunts which, for his sake, we sought. A brief retrospect of that kind here is necessary to a faithful account of what we saw.

The first thing evident in the history, after the arrival of the Hebrews in the Promised Land, is the utter apparent failure for the time of their leader's aim and hope for them. His hope had been, and the aim of their Desert life, to keep them pure from Egyptian popular superstitions on the one hand, and the planetary worship of Canaan on the other: but they were subject to both for some centuries after their arrival in Palestine;—avowedly till the completion of the Law, and the full establishment of the ritual after the time of Josiah; and unconsciously, in several

doctrines and many habits of thought, to the very last. The golden calf at Sinai was not the only one by very many. Jehovah was still considered, at times if not always, the chief God of the Hebrews; and this pre-eminence was asserted by the consecration of golden calves to him exclusively, which indicated him to be the Amun, or king of the gods to this semi-Egyptian people. These calves were set up at Dan and Bethel, and on many a high place between, in the time of Jeroboam, — three generations after the day when David brought the ark into Jerusalem, bidding its gates be lifted up, that the King of Glory might come in.—And as for the Planetary idolatry, the people not only fell, immediately after their arrival, into the worship of the oriental Apollo and Diana, but the horses of the Sun, and chariots of the Sun, were set up as consecrated images at the very entrance of the House of Jehovah, up to the time of Josiah.*

Another failure was as to the design of Moses to have but one place of general worship. For this purpose, he had made one tabernacle; and, as he hoped, secured unity of object of worship by giving them the Ark. But, while the Ark remained at Kirjath-jearim, there were many places where the priests set up altars of sacrifice, and officiated at them: and this went on long after David's great act of taking Jebus, and inclosing and building upon Mount Zion, and bringing in the ark to sanctify his royal city. How painful it is to this hour to remember that generations after David had sung his exulting praises of Zion and the sanctuary, in strains which fire the coldest hearts

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, p. 153, note. (London: Chapman.)

among us, his people should have been sacrificing in preference to the Sun and Moon, or consulting the oracles of Jehovah at Shiloh or Nôb or elsewhere, or bowing before little images at home, while the Temple of Jehovah, with the ark in its Holy Place was set on a hill in the midst of them! David would rather have been a door-keeper in that House than have dwelt feasting in the tents of the worshippers of the groves. Solomon's marriage to an Egyptian wife, and Jeroboam's residence at the court of Shishak, after Shishak's conquest of Jerusalem, were circumstances unfavourable to the Mosaic faith. The priesthood was not till long afterwards appropriated solely to the Levites. They might be preferred, but they were not the only eligible persons for the office: nor were they restricted to serve at the central altars of Jehovah, but officiated in private dwellings, using images. There was thus no body of persons at that time whose business it was to take charge of the honour of Jehovah and the religious interests of the people: and these depended mainly therefore on the mind and character of the king for the time being. Under the devout David, Jehovah was honoured, and his Ark set on the holy hill. Under Solomon, the national God was so far honoured as to have a splendid temple erected to him: but there was nowhere a grosser idolator than the sovereign who did this work:—a weak, uxorious man, who had an Egyptian wife, and concubines who worshipped the stars.—As there was at that time no exclusively Levitical priesthood to take charge of the national religion, nor any effectual centralisation of worship, so there

were, as far as we can learn, no imperative and universal observances. There was certainly no due observation of the Sabbatical year, nor of the Passover. It appears that the Passover was never known to have been celebrated till after the first propounding of the complete Law, in the time of Josiah.* Two centuries and a half after the reign of Rehoboam, the people were worshipping the brazen serpent;—one of the commonest objects of pagan idolatry. Hezekiah "brake it in pieces;" "for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it." † In short, there was, till the days of Josiah, no centralisation by which the people could be kept steady to any belief or practice: and they, being what they were, and in the midst of such a world as lay about them, could be kept in any degree of order by no other means.

When Moses had been first compelled to lower his aspirations for them, and to give them, instead of moral commandments, a ritual from which might emanate a moral influence, he had done all that they were then capable of receiving. He probably saw, what some of the wise now believe, that the fatal fault of the most refined Egyptian religion,—the religion of the Mysteries,—was that it was too much a worship of the Mind, and too little of the Heart: and most strenuous were his efforts so to reveal God to the Hebrews as to fix on Him their hope and fear, and, as a national god, their trust and love. His own self-devotion appears to show that the heart-element did lie in the faith he propounded; and what it expanded to when it met with such a soul as David's, his divine songs fully show. But there were

* 2 Kings, XXIII. 21—23. † 2 Kings, XVIII. 4.

not among the Hebrews many such hearts as David's, —quickened and expanded as his was by his glorious faculty of Imagination and its kindred powers: and the appeals of pagan worship to their passions were too much for their forces of either mind or heart. Under its permanent seductions, drawing them incessantly out of the path of allegiance and sobriety, there was needed some stronger central attraction and established compulsion than for some ages existed. With no records but floating traditions, and perhaps scattered documents; with no exclusive and limited priesthood, no compulsory celebrations which should include them all, no one spot solely consecrated to sacrifice and worship, and no pretence at last of preserving purity of race, it is no wonder that "every man did that which was right in his own eyes;" and that many eyes were much in the dark about what it was right to do. The confusion and demoralisation were perhaps worst in the times of the Judges. In the kingly institution a centralising influence might seem to have been found; though the wise Samuel was too clear-sighted to think so.—A king supported by a priestly caste, as in the Egyptian theocracy, was powerful for the objects needed now: but the Hebrew theocracy was one which did not admit of such a Priest-king as the Egyptians had: and the Jewish king could act on the religious mind of his people only through the *prestige* of his civil office and his personal qualities: and then, as the history shows, for one true worshipper, like David and Josiah, they had many idolators, or intellectual men, like Solomon, who played fast and loose with several gods. It was not in the time of the Judges

alone that "every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

In this long interval, however, between the death of Moses and the great centralisation which took place in the time of Josiah, the name and worship of Jehovah were never lost; were never, indeed, so loftily honoured afterwards as now. At a future time, the people became united in the worship of Jehovah; but their formal homage, growing drier from age to age under the pressure of the priesthood, never rivalled the devotional sentiment of the prophets, and those whom they inspired. It is in no view diverging from our subject here, to give in the words of another a short account of the function of the Hebrew Prophets in the times prior to the establishment of an exclusive Levitical priesthood; that is, in times when it was hoped that the guidance, by the Prophets, of the religious sentiment of the nation would secure its religious fidelity.

"Ancient Polytheism," says our author,* "was always tolerant of collateral polytheistic systems; and he who venerated numerous deities was naturally ready to believe that other gods existed, unknown to him, yet equally deserving of worship. The pure monotheistic faiths, on the contrary, whether of Zoroaster, Moses or Mohammed, have been all marked by an intolerance which in that stage of the world could not be separated from the interests of truth; and on this cardinal point the unity of Israel was to depend. A noble and pure soul looked with disgust on the foul errors entangled with Canaanitish and Syrian superstitions; and in maintaining the exclusive honour of the national god of

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, p. 28.

Israel,—the Lord and Creator of Heaven and Earth,—was guilty of no such mean-spirited sectarianism as might fairly be imputed to one who contended for a Neptune against an Apollo, an Adonis against a Neith. The prophet of Jehovah was in fact striving for the pure moral attributes of God,—for holiness against impurity, majesty and goodness against caprice and cruelty,—for a God whose powers reached to the utmost limits of space and time, against gods whose being was but of yesterday, and whose agencies thwarted one another. Nevertheless, the Hebrew creed was not monotheistic, in the sense of denying the *existence* of other gods. It rather degraded them into devils, and set the omnipotence of Jehovah into proud contrast with their superhuman, yet limited might, than exploded them as utterly fabulous."

"The prophets* must on no account be confounded with the 'priests.'" . . . "Priests must no doubt have been all but coeval with the existence of the nation; and at this time they probably lived in knots at particular towns, where certain sacerdotal families happened to have multiplied, since the character of the priest was essentially *hereditary*. His business was one of routine,—to sacrifice, or to burn incense; to light lamps, to offer shewbread, or perform some other of the ceremonies with which ancient religion abounded. It is a striking fact, that during all Samuel's administration no one ventured to remove the Ark from Kirjath-jearim; nor do the priests seem to have been concerned to take charge of it. But '*the men* of Kirjath-jearim sanctified Eleazar, son of Abinadab, to keep

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, p. 31.

the Ark of Jehovah;' and under the care of the same house it is found in the beginning of David's reign at Jerusalem (2 Samuel, vi. 3). This however is but one out of numerous proofs that the ceremonial system was one which very gradually grew up, and was as yet exceedingly immature.—Except where lands had been attached to some sanctuary, the priest must have lived by the sacrifices and other offerings, and only in very rare cases exercised, or sought to exercise, any influence which can be called spiritual. But no man became a *prophet* by birth: he needed some call for the office, with exercise and teaching; nor did the prophets often concern themselves with mere ceremonies, although they occasionally introduced symbolic actions of their own, suited to impress the public senses. Their characteristic emblem was some musical instrument, and their highest function to compose and sing solemn psalms of religious worship or instruction. Unlike to the Minstrel of the Greeks, who devoted his powers to flatter chieftains and amuse the crowd; or to the later lyrist, who composed laudatory odes for pecuniary recompense;—more like in some respects to a patriotic Tyrtæus, or to a Welsh bard;—the Hebrew prophet differed essentially in this, that his first and great aim was to please and honour God, in faith that from obedience to Him the highest good of man would assuredly follow."

The time arrived when these spiritual leaders, the Prophets, gave place to the Priests; an order of men of whom nothing has been thus far told which leads us to believe that they were of great importance as a caste. Their genealogy was not pure: they were dispersed

about the country, serving at different altars, and even in private families. During the reign of Ahab and Jezebel, they lived side by side with the priests of Baal, against whom the prophets wrought to their utter destruction. It was a remarkable state of things when Elijah was at Mount Carmel, ordaining the slaughter of the priests of Baal at the river Kishon, and the priests of Jehovah were living quietly at Jerusalem, seeing the temples of the two gods standing within view of each other, and themselves associating with the priests of the Sun. It was in the time of Athaliah, as we all know, that this state of things came to an end. It was then that Jehoiada put down at once the queen and the false god, and established the priesthood in that position which it thenceforward maintained, whenever the nation held up its head.—There is no need to say anything here of the Hebrew priesthood; for almost everything that has been said of the Egyptian will answer as an exact description. When it became a Levitical priesthood, a hereditary caste, including all the higher professions, and subsisting by exclusive intermarriage, it was altogether Egyptian, except that it was not necessary that the king should be chosen out of this caste, or should pass through it.—Up to this time, and yet more remarkably afterwards, there was constant and abundant intercourse between the Hebrews and Egypt. Whether the monarchs were at war or in alliance, whether the Egyptians came up against Jerusalem, or to march through into Assyria, they were often in Palestine; and there seems to have been a pretty constant influx of Jews into Egypt, till they had, as we know, five cities, and a great Temple

to Jehovah in the very place where Moses had sat to learn of the priests of Egypt. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Egyptian and Jewish priesthoods bore an almost exact resemblance to each other, nor that we find everywhere Egyptian elements in the faith and philosophy of the Hebrews.

It is believed by the learned that during two centuries and a half after the full assumption of power by the priesthood under Jehoiada, the four first books of the Pentateuch were probably compiled from existing documents and other means of knowledge: and that, finally, the book of Deuteronomy was written, and brought out with the others, in the time of Josiah,* to work the greatest change in the religious condition of the Hebrews which had happened since they left Mount Sinai. The books of the Law were then found in the Ark; in the Ark which is declared to have been empty at preceding dates: and a multitude of particulars in the books themselves prove, as biblical scholars have shown, that they could not have been reduced to their present form before the dates here assigned. For the consternation of King Josiah, and the sensation excited among the people by the denunciations against idolatry,—especially the prevalent idolatry of the country,—we need only refer to the history. Our business with the event is to mark its effect on the Religious Thought of the nation.

From this time, the Hebrews became much more steady in their allegiance to Jehovah. They had now a recognised caste, to take charge of their religious concerns; an established ritual, which occupied their

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, ch. ix.

thoughts and feelings, and trained them in habits of observance; and they had a central place of meeting,—a type of unity—before their eyes. But under this system, though idolatrous vagaries were repressed, the religious life of the people died out; as religious vitality ever does die out from the hour when it becomes the charge of a priesthood. From this time till Christ arose to free it from its trammels, and revive its life, the religious sentiment of the nation wasted away under the bondage of the Law, the formality of the priesthood, and the sectarianism which inevitably springs up where the administration of religion is appropriated by any body of men. This was the great crisis in the mind of the Hebrew people,—whatever crises remained for their fortunes. Between the Exodus and the coming of Christ, there was no other point of time which so affected their religious state. Hitherto they had hovered among the idolatries of the surrounding nations, and had largely intermingled with some of them by marriage; so that for centuries they had been a mongrel people. Now, all this was changed. The Prophets had almost died out: the Priests and Levites had risen: the Law included the whole people within a well-guarded fold: and henceforth they were to be "a peculiar people," as exclusive as they had hitherto been vagrant and careless. In this exclusiveness they immediately began to harden; and what point of hardness of pride, and legality of worship they had reached by the time of Christ's coming, his history shows.

Now that there was a Law,—a complete, tangible, recorded Law,—that body of men called Lawyers arose. Before this time, they were never heard of. Now they

began to study, interpret and expound the Law, and, in proportion as the nation became consolidated, they rose to fill the important place which they held when Christ stood in the Temple, six centuries after this consolidation of written memorials, and perhaps oral tradition from the time of Moses downwards, into a system of Statute Law.—This origin of Rabbinism seems to have as much connexion with Egypt as the origin of the Hebrew faith, ritual and literature. As the author of the history above quoted says,* "Ever since the reign of Uzziah the intercourse with Egypt had been steadily on the increase; and the colonies of Jews and Israelites there were so considerable, that the absentees in Egypt and the exiles in Assyria are often spoken of in one breath (which indeed we have seen in Isaiah) as though co-ordinate and almost commensurate. Although Egyptian art perhaps was sinking, Egyptian learning must have been at its height in Isaiah's day; and wealthy Jews established in that country, where all the trials before a judge are said to have gone on in writing, would necessarily gain more definite ideas of the value of a complete written body of statutes accessible to all. Communication with the exiles in the cultivated cities of Assyria must have had the same tendency." Here again we have that conjunction which, in regard to religious matters, Moses so dreaded, and from which dread he made of his people a Desert tribe for so long;—the intermingling of the Hebrews with the Egyptians on the one hand, and their eastern neighbours on the other; and, according to our author, the Thought of these different peoples was probably

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, p. 319.

infused into the Law of the Hebrews, no less than into their faith and their traditions. He says,* "In the new school there must have been very various minds; some disposed to heathenism and Egyptian mysteries, others simple as Moses; yet all eager for Levitical aggrandisement."

As it is the religious life of the nation that we are now glancing back upon, it is not necessary to say more of the Captivity than that when the Remnant returned, they immediately placed themselves under their own Law and ordinances, under the protection of Persia. They sought their old homes, on their arrival, and provided necessaries for their families, and then, a month after their return, assembled at Jerusalem, reared an altar among the ruins of the "beautiful House" which Solomon had built, offered sacrifices, and kept the feast of Tabernacles.—Then followed the rebuilding of the Temple, and the return of Ezra, the priest and scribe, to look to the thorough re-establishment of the Law and Worship of his people. He annulled the marriages with heathens which had taken place during the interval of uncertainty and depression; and almost before his work of ecclesiastical purification was completed, Nehemiah arrived to look to the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. While Nehemiah was superintending this work, Ezra finished his revisal of the sacred books, and settled the Old Testament canon. He changed the text from the old Hebrew to the Chaldee, which was now more intelligible to the people.† The Samaritans not choosing to adopt the change, the old

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, p. 319.

† Palestine, Kitto, p. 653.

character was henceforth called the Samaritan text.—The language itself having become strange to the returned Jews, they needed an interpretation: and in order to give them one, that solemn public reading was held which is recorded in the 8th chapter of Nehemiah, when Ezra the Scribe and his coadjutors "read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."

And now occurs a very interesting period in the religious life of the Jews:—the rise of the sect of the Pharisees. At what time precisely they became a sect, there is no saying now. Josephus, who was one of them, only knew that they existed long before his time. They certainly arose after the promulgation of the Law; and probably very soon after; their particular function,—of delivering the Oral Law,—being indicated by the written Law coming into common use. The main doctrine of the Pharisees was that Aaron had handed down an oral law, and set of traditions, to accompany the written Law: and that the traditions were the more important and valuable of the two, and to be used for the interpretation of the written Law. As they professed to hold these traditions, there would have been hardly any limits to their power, if their claims had been fully and universally admitted—as we know, they were not. There were balancing sects; and we see in the denunciations, both of the Baptist and of Jesus, how the Pharisees were regarded by those who were reared in, or inclined towards, the principles of a different sect.—The Pharisaic body including men of education only, it is natural that some of its doctrines should be of foreign derivation. They were the

"bibliolators" of the Jews, sacrificing the spirit and meaning to the letter of their sacred records; and building up on every phrase of this letter a structure of arbitrary meanings which made the record "of none effect." Some of their material for commentary was derived from the Egyptians, and some from the Greeks (who derived their opinions from Egypt) and some from the East. Their Pythagorean doctrines about death and the soul were, as we have before said in connexion with Pythagoras himself, coincident with those of the Egyptians. They believed in the abode of the dead in Hades; in the immediate and eternal damnation of the souls of the desperately wicked; and in the transmigration of all other souls. They believed in a partial Necessity; enough to authorise their doctrine of a Providence; but so partial as to permit them to punish heretical opinion severely, while they visited moral crime but lightly. Such is the account given by Josephus the Pharisee. They believed in the existence of angels, good and bad; and agreed with the Egyptians in the assertion that the chief of the good angels,—the first of the sons of the Supreme, was uncreated, and capable of manifestation on earth, for beneficent objects. This was evidently the Osiris of the Egyptians, the Logos of the Platonists, and the Second Person of the Trinity set forth by the Platonising Christians in a later age. They believed in bad angels as well as good, and perpetuated that doctrine of a Power of Evil which in their time had been imported from other faiths, in direct opposition to the purer doctrine taught by Isaiah, xlv. 7. Their great remaining tenet was truly and exclusively Jewish; that Jehovah was so bound to His people as that he *could*

not condemn nor forsake them, but was obliged to grant them a Messiah, and eternal prosperity.—As for their practical life, they were likened, as Josephus tells us, to the Stoics: and they professed extreme and exalted virtue: but, by means of their oral law, there was always an escape for those who desired one; and the result seems to have been that while the most ostentatious and conspicuous of the Pharisees were disagreeable and dangerous from their sanctimoniousness and legal morality, the majority of them were much like other people,—good or bad more in proportion to their natural constitution and position than through the abstract doctrines they held. That they held such doctrines is, however, a matter of the highest interest to us. That there were humble and teachable Pharisees is as certain as that there are proud and selfish Christians. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, and other men who could stoop to learn, were Pharisees.—Dr. Kitto, after speaking of their temper and conduct, observes * "Of their *doctrines*, as far as they went, and as far as they are noticed, Christ and his apostles appear to have thought more favourably—or, at least, they are much preferred to the opposite doctrine of the Sadducees."

In opposition to the Pharisees,—the Traditionists,—arose the sect of the Anti-traditionists, the Sadducees, whose doctrines are soon told, as their profession consisted chiefly of negations. They denied the existence of any spiritual beings but Jehovah himself, and therefore the future existence of man. It is noticeable that in this, and in its necessary consequence, their inexorable punishment of moral offences, they were primitive

* Palestine, p. 719.

Hebrews,—close followers of Moses. And they strictly adhered to the recorded Law, rejecting traditions altogether. They held the doctrine of Free-will to its utmost extent, which indeed was necessary under their practice of inexorable retribution. The date of the rise of this sect is not more clearly known than that of the Pharisees: but it is evident that the doctrines of the Sadducees had a large intermixture from the Greek: and they were held by the literary and travelled men of the Hebrew aristocracy: by those who were most likely to be conversant with Greek writings, and with such strangers from that country as occasionally visited Jerusalem. It was they who carried some Greek elements into the deliberations of the Sanhedrim, where they were the most powerful party in the time of Christ, and into the administration of the priestly office; for Caiaphas and Ananias, high priests, were Sadducees. Though they were more primitive Mosaists than the Pharisees, they were not more acceptable to Jesus. Their aristocratic tendencies, their scepticism and pride of intellect, and their corrupting doctrine of Free-will were all diametrically opposed to the views and aspirations of one who came to offer his Glad Tidings to the poor,—to give rest to the souls of the weary and heavy laden,—and to teach that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the ordination of God;—of one, in short, whose sympathies were with the remaining sect, —the Essenes.

It is impossible to enter philosophically in any degree into the mind of Christ without considering how large an element of his thought was the life and doctrine of the Essenes. When we read of them in Josephus and

Philo, we see reflected back as in a mirror the life of the gospel, or, at least, the idea of that life which was held by the early Christians. The Sermon on the Mount might be taken as one long blessing on the Essenes,—the non-resistants, the abjurers of property, the humble, the mortified, the industrious, the charitable! The leading object,—the central purpose—of the Essenes was that of fulfilling the Moral Ideal of the Law. While the Pharisees were allegorising, and heaping Traditions upon the original structure of the Mosaic system, and the Sadducees were rigidly preserving and adhering to the simplicity of that structure, the Essenes gave their whole mind to the ascertainment and realisation of its moral import. There is no doubt that they added much to the meaning of Moses, and saw many moral principles and practices in his system which he never put there: and it is clear that their additions were derived from Egypt and Greece. There was a close affinity between them and the Pythagoreans who resorted to Egypt in great numbers when their schools in Europe were broken up. The Essene communities in Egypt and Palestine, between which a brotherly intercourse was always going on, were mainly Pythagorean in their discipline, and in their mysteries; and so remarkably Christian in their moral doctrine and practices, that it was long supposed that Philo, giving an account of the Egyptian Essenes, was a Christian giving an account of a Christian community. There is no question, however, of their prosperous existence for some centuries before the birth of Christ. Their societies undoubtedly formed the model of the first Christian communities, and of subsequent monastic

associations. They held their goods in common, forbidding a man to have two cloaks or two staves, and not allowing him to be in want of one. They were in the strictest sense Necessarians, going far beyond the Pharisees in this particular, and not being exceeded by the Mohammedans themselves. They believed that the hairs of men's heads were all numbered, and that every movement of their thoughts was determined by an immutable providence. They held that men are truly and practically brethren, under the Paternity of God: a most memorable advance upon the morality of the then existing world. They refused to call any man Master upon earth, denouncing slavery, and discountenancing every kind of servitude. They ordered obedience to the civil power, but no participation in it. All political action was discountenanced; and absolute non-resistance, giving the cheek to the smiter rather than raising the hand, was inculcated. With this went unlimited forgiveness of injuries. They might have had for their motto that glorious text of the Kurán, "To endure and to pardon is the wisdom of life." They taught that the best temper for man consisted in three affections: Love of God; love of the Truth, and love of Man: and that the best employments of man corresponded to these: viz., contemplation and healing the bodies and souls of men. Hence the name of Therapeutæ which they bore in Egypt. They called themselves, and were called by others, Physicians of bodies and souls. While abstaining from marriage themselves, as a matter of expediency, they opened their arms to children, out of love to them for their purity, as well as compassion for their helplessness. They might have

inscribed over their doors the words "Suffer the little children to come unto us, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven:" and the children did go to them, and were taken in and cherished, as were the hungry and the naked, and the sick and miserable. They reprobated oaths, and practised the utmost plainness of speech, thinking that all exaggerations of their Yea and Nay came of evil.—Another primary point with them was strictness of truth:—their Yea was yea, and their Nay nay.*

In estimating the religious elements of Jewish life before the time of Christ, it is impossible not to be struck with the coincidences between the life and doctrine of the Essenes and the life and doctrine of Jesus: and further, when we read his rebukes of the other two sects, and observe that he nowhere denounces any practice of the Essenes, while incessantly preaching their views of truth, and inculcating their morality, it is clear that they enjoyed his favour. In the opinion of learned men† there is much evidence to show that the Baptist was an Essene of the anchorite order, being "in the deserts till the time of his showing unto Israel."‡ There were two orders in the body of the Essenes; the contemplative and the practical. The contemplative were the Jewish anchorites in Egypt, who retired to caves and fastnesses while Cambyses ravaged the Valley of the Nile; and who afterwards were the model of the Christian hermits who were sprinkled among the desert rocks of Egypt. Of this order it is that John was supposed to be, with

* Philo, De Vitâ Contemplativâ. Josephus, Antiq. Book XVIII. ch. 2.
† See Taylor in Calmet "Dictionary to the Bible." ‡ Luke I. 80.

his desert dress and food.—The other order lived, as has been said, in community, employed in works of charity as well as in contemplation. The Essenes of Palestine are declared by Josephus to have been of this second order; and their chief establishment was on the western shore of the Dead Sea:—that is, in the neighbourhood of the Baptist's home,—"in the hill country of Judea."—Jesus was for some time a disciple of John, with evidently no thought, at that period, of a higher destiny for himself. From this, from the celibacy of both, (otherwise a fault and reproach among the Jews,) from the omission of all rebuke of this sect alone, and from his incessant promulgation of the Essene doctrine and morality, it appears that those scholars are probably right who believe that Jesus received, like thousands of the Jewish youth of his day, his training from the Essenes. The number of the professed Essenes at that time was four thousand in Palestine; and these were the teachers of a multitude of the next generation. In Egpyt, the sect was much larger.

There is no need to point out the faults and dangers of the Essene institutions. They were the same as are found in all forms of monastic life, and all schemes of mystical religion. While admiring the singular beauty (so endeared to us by our Christian associations,) of their principles of worship, affection and action, we see in their celibacy and other asceticism, and their uniform rule of life for all comers, the same liabilities and errors as belong to monastic life everywhere, under all systems of faith. In the somewhat ascetic, and entirely non-resistant character which the Glad Tidings of Jesus derived from this element of

their origin, we certainly see the prophecy of the rise of Mohammedanism in the world, and its temporary spread to a wider extent than its parent Christianity: but we are at the same time struck with the glorious liberality of those Glad Tidings, and their exemption from all the errors and extravagances which were incorporated with the Essene scheme and its workings.

During the infancy and growth of all these sects, political events succeeded one another, of such a kind, and in such an order, as to bring a great accession of ideas to the Jewish mind, and cause a wide association with the minds of other countries.

Alexander the Great came, after his destruction of Tyre, (B.C. 332), to chastise Jerusalem, because the High Priest had pleaded his oath of allegiance to Darius. He was met on the heights of Sapha, within view of Jerusalem, by the High Priest and a long train of attendant priests, and citizens in white garments, who came forth to set before the conqueror the claims and the threats of Jehovah: and then, as the history tells,* he did what he afterwards did when a similar train met him from Memphis:—he went out to meet the High Priest Jaddua, and adored the Name inscribed on his mitre, declaring to his Greek attendants that what he worshipped was not the minister of Jehovah, but the great God whom he represented. And here, as afterwards in honour of Amun, he sacrificed in honour of the Supreme God, and secured to the people the enjoyment of their own laws and their accustomed privileges. Parmenio was by his side; and many Greek philosophers and learned men in his train,

* Josephus, Antiq. XI., 8, 4, 5.

who freely associated with the higher classes of the Jews.—And then ensued that period of Egyptian protection,—sixty years of repose while the Jews paid tribute to the Ptolemies, and had unrestricted intercourse with the Egyptian priesthood, and liberty to dwell, and build, and worship, at Alexandria and Heliopolis,—which had great effect in enlarging the minds of the Jewish sects, and abolishing their nationality of thought and feeling. At this time, the prevalence of Greek proper names in Jewish families shows how intimate was the intercourse of those two nations. As Dr. Kitto observes,* "there is ample evidence that the more opulent classes cultivated the language, and imbibed some of the manners of the Greeks. It is also apparent that some acquaintance with the Greek philosophers was obtained, and made wild work in Jewish minds."—And afterwards came the dread power of Rome, to lay waste Jerusalem by its agents, the generals of Antiochus, when, on a certain memorable Sabbath, the streets of Jerusalem flowed with blood, and the most awful of all events happened,—the suspension of the daily sacrifice. It was in the month of June (B.C. 167) that this took place, and that Jerusalem was completely deserted, the surviving inhabitants taking refuge among the nearest of the gentiles. The temple was then dedicated, at the command of Antiochus, to Jupiter Olympius; an altar to the heathen god was set up upon that hitherto sacred to Jehovah, and the people were instructed in the Greek religion by teachers sent among them for the purpose.†—Then arose the Asmonean family, to restore the national

* Kitto's Palestine, p. 674.

† Ibid. pp. 685, 686.

worship, and reconstitute the Jewish people. They might overthrow the heathen altars, and declare again the name of Jehovah; but they could not drive out the Greek elements which had found their way into the Jewish mind, or depress the sect of the Sadducees which rose into a flourishing condition by means of them. The army of Judas Maccabæus came to Mount Zion, and cast ashes on their heads when they saw how the temple of Jehovah lay open to the winds, and how its "courts were grown over with shrubs, as in the forest, or on the mountain." They might and did repair the temple; but they could not undo that desecration of the national mind which had taken place from the intrusion of the heathen.

Then ensued the enmity between the Pharisees and the Asmonean princes, which, as either cause or consequence of the interference of that sect in public affairs,* could not but have a great influence on religious opinion in Palestine. The Asmonean house went over to the Sadducees; and a bitter war of opinion ensued, fatal to unity of faith throughout the nation.—The next time we look towards the temple, we find Pompey in it,—intruding with his officers actually into the Holy of Holies. He captured it B.C. 63, on the very day kept sacred as a mourning fast by the Jews, as the anniversary of the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. This was the date of the establishment of the Roman power in Palestine. The walls of the city were demolished, and the Jews became tributary to Rome.

It is observable that Egyptian worship was at this

* Kitto's Palestine, p. 705.

time and afterwards so eagerly followed in Italy, "that Augustus made a law that no Egyptian ceremonies should enter the city, or even the suburbs of Rome." * And again, it is remarkable that the Egyptian and Jewish faiths were classed together by the authorities at Rome. Tacitus tells us that "the Roman Senate made a new law (A.D. 19) against the Egyptian and Jewish superstitions, and banished to Sardinia four thousand men who were found guilty of being Jews." †

Nothing is more striking to the students of these critical times of the world's history than the evidence of the wide intercourse of minds which existed in ages when we are apt to suppose that, for want of the art of printing, nations were shut up within themselves, and remained as exclusive in their characteristics of mind as of race. We should remember that war acted upon them almost as powerfully as commerce does upon us, and quite differently from the warfare of modern times. It not only opened countries to each other, but brought the respective citizens face to face. A colonial or other connexion usually grew up out of war; and the wisest men of either country travelled in the territory of the other; and there was frequently an exchange of citizens. The countries of the old world had commerce too. It did not occasion the extensive intercourse of modern times, nor intermingle different people to such a degree as war: but it wrought in its own way. We must also consider that if the ancients had not our extensive circulation of books, they had, on that account, far more earnestness in their inquiry after new ideas, and their reception of them. When sages

* Sharpe's History of Egypt, p. 356. † Ibid. p. 363.

and priests met face to face, from distant countries, they impressed one another far more deeply than we are often impressed by books; and their pursuit of philosophy was much more serious than ours. It appears that the Jews had their full share of the advantages of foreign intercourses; and that they were so far from being the homogeneous and separate people that they are ordinarily supposed to be, that abundant foreign elements entered into their constitution, both of mind and race, from the time of their entrance upon the Promised Land to that of their final dispersion.

It cannot be overlooked, in this review, how large was the Egyptian element, in comparison with every other. On every side, except the east, it was continually, however silently, flowing in. The Hebrew mind was fed by the Egyptian incessantly, throughout its whole existence. Besides what the Jews obtained from Moses, and by all their direct fraternisation with the Egyptians, at intervals, for many ages, the Egyptian mind communicated with theirs through the Greeks, the Syrians, and the Romans: so that to understand their faith, their ordinances, their philosophy, their sects, their monachism, their history and their literature, it is necessary to go back to Egypt for the key. To a certain extent, the case is the same with some other nations, — with the Greeks and the Etruscans especially: but the strongest affinity we know of among ancient peoples was that between the Egyptians and the Hebrews; and it is highly necessary not to lose sight of this kindred relation in exploring the mind of the Jewish people at any assigned period.

Herod began rebuilding the temple B.C. 17; and it was fit for the resumption of the service in B.C. 7. It was this new structure that Jesus and his disciples were contemplating when they spoke of its having been "forty and six years in building."—Here it was that he found the Pharisees haughtily insisting on the minutiæ of their ritual, and elaborating their Pythagorean doctrines of the soul and its prospects. Here it was that he found the Scribes expounding the Law to those who could never hope to understand its intricacies without help. Here it was that he found the Sadducees contending for the simplicity of the primitive Law, and for that Majesty of Jehovah which forbade his interference with the affairs of men. Here it was that he saw carried to the altar, the sacrifices sent by Essenes who would not personally mingle in the pomps and vanities of a ritual worship. Here it was that he found, brought in by the four winds, and intermingling like the fumes of the incense and the smoke of the sacrifice, all that the minds of distant nations had to offer before the sanctuary of the true God; the wisdom of the Egyptians, the science of the Assyrians, the philosophy of the Greeks, and the now strict monotheism of the Hebrews. Here it was that he, by his god-like nature, gathered into himself and assimilated all that was true, deep, noble, and endearing in this world-wide range of thought, and gave it forth again, in such a music of Glad Tidings, ringing clear under that temple roof, as that every heart felt,—"never man spake like this man!"

CHAPTER III.

JERUSALEM.—THE ENGLISH MISSION.—MOSQUE OF OMAR.—JEWS' PLACE OF WAILING.—VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT.—GREEK FIRE.—DAVID'S TOMB AND CÆNACULUM.—ARMENIAN CONVENT.—LEPERS.—CAVE OF JEREMIAH.—ENVIRONS.

We considered ourselves most fortunate in our lodgment at Jerusalem;—I mean in the position of our rooms at Salvador's hotel. The house would not contain the whole of our party, and three went to lodgings. But we ladies had light airy rooms opening upon the highest platform of the hotel:—this platform being the roof of a lower set of chambers. I was never tired of gazing abroad from the parapet of our little terrace, from which I could command a large extent of the flat roofs of the city, and of its picturesque walls. The narrow, winding street far below, which we overlooked almost from end to end, was the Via Dolorosa; and it was spanned midway by the Ecce Homo arch. This Mournful Way, where I rarely saw any one walking, attracted the eye all the more from its being almost the only street we had a glimpse of; the streets of Eastern cities being so narrow as not to be visible from a height. Some few were traceable by a comparison of the lines of house tops, and the guidance of the minarets which

sprang from among the roofs, tall and light as the poplar from the long grass of the meadow: but the only street which we could look down into was the Via Dolorosa. Beyond the city, and directly opposite, rose the long slope of Olivet. It was now the time of full moon; and evening after evening, I leaned on that parapet, watching for the coming up of the large yellow moon behind the ridge of the Mount of Olives. By day the slopes of the Mount were green with the springing wheat, and dappled with the shade of the Olive clumps. By night, those clumps and lines of trees were dark amidst the lights and shadows cast by the moon; and they guided the eye, in the absence of daylight, to the most interesting points,—the descent to the brook Kedron, the road to Bethany, and the place whence Jesus is said to have looked over upon the noble city when he pronounced its doom.

It is still a noble city. The Jebusites certainly chose for their fort one of the finest sites in the world: and when David took it from them, he might well glory in his beautiful Zion. From this day forward how dead seemed to me all my former impressions of Jerusalem! —not of its sacredness, but of its beauty and nobleness. I can scarcely remember the time when I did not know familiarly all its hills, and its gates, and its temple courts, so as to read the New Testament as with a plan in my head. But I never had the slightest conception of that beauty which now at once enabled me to enter into the exultation of David, and the mourning of Nehemiah, and the generous concern of Titus, and the pride of the Saracen, and the enthusiasm of the Crusader. The mournful love of the Holy City grew from

day to day, as I became familiar with its precincts; but no single view so took me by surprise as that which we obtained in the course of our walk this first day.

There is a strange charm in the mere streets, from the picturesque character of the walls and archways. The old walls of yellow stone are so beautifully tufted with weeds, that one longs to paint every angle and projection, with its mellow colouring, and dangling and trailing garlands. And the shadowy archways, where the vaulted roofs intersect each other, till they are lost in the dazzle of the sunshine beyond, are like a noble dream. The pavement is the worst I ever walked on; —worse than Cologne; worse than my native city of Norwich: but, being a native of Norwich, and having been familiar with its pavement for thirty years, I was not so distressed as my companions, who could hardly make their way in Jerusalem over the large, slippery stones, slanting all manner of ways.

We found the bazaars much crowded, this first day, and abounding in fruits and vegetables. It was Holy Week, which accounted for the throng, and for the display of oranges, lemons, figs, nuts and almonds, pumpkins and cucumbers. The lightness of the complexions, and the mild beauty of the faces were very striking, after so many weeks among the Arabs in the Desert.

We were now on our way to the English church, from which we obtained the fine view I have alluded to. The walls of this new church were up, and the pillars rising; and a spiral staircase at one corner was so finished as that we could mount. Some of our party exclaimed at the smallness of this pretty new church: but I much doubt whether there will ever be Jewish

converts enough to fill it. I should have supposed that any consideration at home of the genius of the Jewish religion, and much more on the spot, would have shown the unsoundness of the scheme. Those who are intimate with the minds of educated and conscientious Jews are aware that such cannot be converted to Christianity: that the very foundation of their faith cannot support that superstructure: that there can be, to them, no reason why they should change, and every conceivable reason why they should not. *They* well know that it is only the ill-grounded Jew who can be converted; the weak, the ignorant, or the needy and immoral. After all these years, the converts are very few; they are not all Jews; and there is a difficulty about the maintenance of even those few. There was talk, when we were at Jerusalem, of endeavouring to set up a House of Industry, because the converts of course become outcasts from their own people. Those who withdraw these converts from their old connexions, habits, principles and intercourses, are indeed under an obligation to supply them with new: but it is to be hoped that they consider well what they are doing, and how tremendous a responsibility they are taking on themselves, as regards the *morale*, as well as the fortunes of their converts. It is no light matter to subvert a man's habits of mind and life, to isolate him in the midst of his own city and race, and render him wholly dependent on his religious teachers. It should be well considered whether the loss of the faith of his fathers, and the radical shaking of his own; the exclusion from family, society, and employment; the loss of tranquillity, and the great moral dangers of such an uprooting as

none but a Jew can ever experience, are really compensated for by anything that the Mission at Jerusalem has hitherto found itself able to impart. It scarcely needs to be pointed out, in regard to this proposed House of Industry, that when once the Mission becomes an alms-house affair, before the eyes of the city,—a city full of Mohammedans and Jews who already regard the Protestant Christians with utter contempt,—there is an end to all hope of converting any but the alms-house order of people;—the needy and lazy. The hospital of the Mission is an interesting establishment; and, to all appearance, well managed. If the Mission is to be a charitable institution, well and good, (supposing it to be proved, as a charity, worth its cost:) only let it be called so: that a vast expense may perhaps be saved, which is sorely craved by our heathens at home, who are unquestionably in a far worse state of spiritual destitution than the Jews in Palestine. While we have millions of savages in our own island,—heathens without heathen gods—I cannot see why we should spend on a handful of strangers who have already a noble faith of their own, the resources which would support Home Missions to a much greater extent. Time will show: but my own persuasion is that the Jerusalem Mission cannot, from errors inherent in its very conception, long endure.—On the Good Friday when we were there, five Jews,—three men and two women—were baptised: and one of the ladies of the Mission told me that the number of converts was sixty in the thirteen years since the first effort was made. We were attended by their first convert, Abdallah, as a guide. He was not a Jew, but

a Druse. He was an obliging, genial fellow, who told us that he very much wished to be mentioned in a book, if I should write one. He pressed for a recommendatory certificate from me and others of our party. I did not know enough of him to grant his request, and was advised against it by those who had reason to know him. We were none of us, however, disposed to bear hard on the rapacity of any poor fellow who, cast out from his old faith and connexions, was deprived of his means of bread.

The congregation in the little church used by the Mission till their own is completed, was very small, even on Good Friday. Deducting the Mission families and our own large company, there were few left over.—We went to church that day with feelings of no ordinary interest. A Christian service at Jerusalem on Good Friday! It was an occasion which might rouse the most indifferent. So I should have thought: but never was I present at a service so utterly dead. This was not a matter of opinion: the deadness was a plain matter of fact. I am aware that it must be so with Missions in foreign lands, under the discouragements of the position, and in the absence of the intellectual stir and spiritual sympathy which naturally and continually occur at home: but yet I did wonder whether the converts could find in a service like this as much spiritual interest and benefit as their brethren without experience every sabbath in the time-hallowed services of the synagogue. Of the qualifications of the Bishop in every way, and the sincerity of his clergy, I never heard or conceived a doubt. The impediments to adequate success are in the very nature of the enterprise,

and the position of the parties, and are, as I think will be proved, insuperable by them.

Our first view over the whole city was from the top of the Mission Church. The extent and handsome appearance of Jerusalem surprised us. The population is said not to exceed fifteen thousand: but the city covers a great extent of ground, from the courts which are enclosed by eastern houses, and the large unoccupied spaces which lie within the walls. The massive stone walls and substantial character of the buildings remove every appearance of sordidness, when the place is seen from a height: and the clearness of the atmosphere, and the hue of the building-material give a clean and cheerful air to the whole which accords little with the traveller's preconception of the fallen state of Jerusalem. The environs look fertile and flourishing, except where the Moab mountains rise lofty and bare, but adorned with the heavenly hues belonging to the glorious climate. The minarets glittered against the clear sky; and the arches, marble platform, and splendid variegated buildings of the Mosque of Omar, crowning the heights of Moriah, were very beautiful.—We were glad to hear from the Consul's lady that the climate is found very healthy, there being always a fresh breeze, in the hottest summer weather.

On Good Friday, we took a very interesting walk. In the course of it, we saw the interior of a Jewish house, where the gentlemen went on business.—The handsome lady of the house invited me to the raised part of the apartment, while the gentlemen sat below, awaiting the host, who was so picturesque a

figure, with his two caps,—one on the top of the other,—his marked Jewish features, and graceful attitudes, his spectacles and vast beard, that I longed to carry away a sketch of him. The women of the household had very fair complexions and blue eyes. As for the apartment, the floor was ricketty; and so were the two bedsteads. The table-cloth, strewed with the crumbs of the late meal, was absolutely filthy: while there was a great quantity of plate, massive and old-fashioned, on a sideboard; the cushions of the deewán were of rich brocade; and some prints of eminent living Jews hung round the walls. The dress of the Jewish women is deforming to the figure, but very becoming to the head. The turbans of the men, chiefly blue or white, are substantial and lofty, like the priests' helmets which we see in old pictures. It was always a treat to walk through the Jew quarter, and especially on the Sabbath, when numbers were abroad in their best costume, sitting at their doors, or passing to or from the synagogue through the quiet streets. They are a very handsome race, with eyes which seem to distinguish them from the rest of mankind,—large, soft, and of the deepest expression.

We went forth to-day by the Via Dolorosa, which was so quiet that the horse's feet of a passing rider sounded as they might in the Sîk at Petra. We turned into an arcade to the right, in order to get as near as infidels may to the Mosque of Omar. No Jew or Christian can pass the threshold of the outermost courts without certain and immediate death by stoning or beating. It requires some little resolution, for those who dislike being hated, to approach this threshold, so

abominable are the insults offered to strangers. A boy began immediately to spit at us. We presently obtained a better view of this usurping temple from the city wall which we climbed for the purpose.—From hence, the inclosure was spread out beneath us, as in a map, and we could perceive the proportion it bore to the rest of the city, and observe how much lower Mount Moriah was than Zion. The Mosque was very beautiful, with its vast dome, and its walls of variegated marbles, and its noble marble platform, with its flights of steps and light arcades; and the green lawn which sloped away all round, and the cypress trees, under which a row of worshippers were at their prayers. It was the Mohammedan sabbath; and troops of children were at play on the grass; and parties of women in white,—Mohammedan nuns,—were sitting near them; and the whole scene was proud and joyous. But, with all this before my eyes, my mind was with the past. It seemed as if the past were more truly before me than what I saw. Here was the ground chosen by David, and levelled by Solomon to receive the Temple of Jehovah. Here it was that the great king lavished his wealth; and hither came the Sun-worshippers from the East to lay hands on the treasure, and level the walls, and carry the people away captive.—Here was it restored under Ezra, and fortified round when the people worked at the walls with arms in their girdles and by their sides: and here, when all had been again laid waste, did Herod raise the structure which was so glorious that the Jews were as proud as the Mohammedans now before my eyes, and mocked at the saying that it should ever be overthrown. I seemed to see it

now as it was then, with its glittering roof, whose plates of gold were too dazzling to look upon in the morning sun; and its golden vine, covering the front of the Holy place; and its colonnades which separated the temple itself from its outer courts. I looked for the place where the Sheep-gate was, and the Water-gate, through which the priest went down to the spring of Siloam, and declared, as he returned with the golden ewer, that thus they drew water from the wells of salvation. I looked for the court beyond which the money-changers should not have been permitted to intrude; and the Court of the Gentiles, and the Court of the Women; and where the Treasury-chest stood, so placed on the right of the entrance that when the worshipper threw in his gift, the left hand would not know what the right hand did. I saw where the Scribes must have sat to teach, and where Christ so taught in their jealous presence as to make converts of those who were sent to apprehend him. I saw where the altar stood, whence the smoke went up from the morning and evening sacrifice: and the Holy Place, with the ark in the midst; and the long purple curtain,—the veil destined to be rent,—which separated it from the Holy of Holies, where no one entered but the High Priest alone. These places had been familiar to my mind's eye from my youth up: and now I looked at the ground they had occupied, amidst scenery but little changed, with an emotion which none but those who have made the Bible the study of the best years of their life could conceive of. But this was not all. Here it was that Titus saw, from his camp over to our right, the flames shooting up to destroy the building which

he had resolved to save. Here it was consumed; and here the plough was brought to destroy the very foundations, so that one stone should not be left upon another. Here it was that "Moriah became a ploughed field," and the wild grapes grew where the golden vine had hung its clusters.—It was long after this before any Jew could see his Zion and Moriah even as we saw them now. All were banished; and when they returned and hung about the land, hoping to find some way in, so that they might die within sight of their holy hills, they were incessantly driven back. In the age of Constantine, however, they were allowed to approach so as to see the city from the surrounding heights;—a mournful liberty, like that of permitting an exile to look at his native shores from the sea, but never to land. At length, the Jews were allowed to purchase of the Roman soldiers leave to enter Jerusalem once a-year; and, of all days, on the anniversary of the fall of the city before Titus;—and merely to do—what we presently saw their descendants doing.

I have said how proud and prosperous looked the Mosque of Omar, with its marble buildings, its green lawns, the merry children, and gay inmates making holiday; all these ready and eager to stone to death on the instant any Jew or Christian who should dare to bring his homage to the sacred spot. This is what we saw within the walls.—We next went round the outside, till we came, by a narrow crooked passage, to a desolate spot, occupied by desolate people. Under a high, massive, very ancient wall was a dusty narrow inclosed space; where we saw the most mournful groups I ever encountered. This high ancient wall, where

weeds are springing from the crevices of the stones, is believed to be a part, and the only part remaining, of Solomon's temple wall: and here the Jews come every Friday, to their Place of Wailing, as it is called, to mourn over the fall of their Beautiful House, and pray for its restoration. What a contrast did these humbled people present to the proud Mohammedans within! The women were sitting in the dust,—some wailing aloud, some repeating prayers with moving lips, and others reading them from books on their knees. A few children were at play on the ground, and some aged men sat silent, their heads drooped on their breasts. Several younger men were leaning against the wall, pressing their foreheads against the stones, and resting their books on their clasped hands in the crevices. With some, this wailing is no form: for I saw tears on their cheeks. I longed to know if any had hope in their hearts that they, or their children within a few generations, should pass that wall, and become the echoes of that ancient cry "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, that the King of Glory may come in!" If they have any such hope, it may give some sweetness to this rite of humiliation. We had no such hope for them; and it was with unspeakable sadness that I, for one, turned away from the thought of the pride and tyranny within that inclosure, and the desolation without, carrying with me a deep-felt lesson on the strength of human faith, and the weakness of the tie of human brotherhood.

Whether the strength be equal under all faiths or not, it appears that the weakness is. See here what is done in the name of religion! This Jerusalem is the

most sacred place in the world, except Mekkeh, to the Mohammedan: and to the Christian and the Jew, it is the most sacred place in the world. What are they doing in this sanctuary of their common Father, as they all declare it to be? Here are the Mohammedans eager to kill any Jew or Christian who may enter the Mosque of Omar. There are the Greek and Latin Christians hating each other, and ready to kill any Jew or Mohammedan who may enter the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. And here are the Jews, pleading against their enemies, in the vengeful language of their ancient prophets. On them, we are not disposed to bear hardly; and we do not wonder if, in the imagination of the pride which is glorying in its usurpation behind that wall, and when the breeze brings the light laughter of the children who are sporting within, the mourners cry from their Place of Wailing, "Happy shall he be who rewardeth thee as thou hast served us! Happy shall he be who taketh thy little ones, and dasheth them against the stones!" But still, looking upon Religion as she now appears in this, her throne and sanctuary, we find but a hideous idol which has usurped the oracles, instructing men to be proud before God, and to hate one another.

We were shown, near this spot, the remains of the bridge which once joined the two hills, Zion and Moriah. The piers of a bridge are distinct enough. The heaps of rubbish and ruined wall here made this place as desolate as any thing we saw in Egypt.

One object with us to-day was to sit down, and read as much of the gospel history as relates to the temple and its vicinity, within view of the places themselves:

but Abdallah would not permit us to do so. He had prepared his list of what we were to see, and took the management of us completely. He led us to the Golden Gate: a portal of the Mosque of Omar, well walled up, and constantly guarded; the Mohammedans having a tradition that if ever they are driven out from possession, it will be by the Jews or Christians entering at this gate.—The temple wall can hardly have been entirely levelled at this part,—any more than at the Jews' Place of Wailing; for the very large stones,—blocks of twenty-four feet long,—built into the wall near the base, are, by universal agreement, ancient; though all the upper part of the wall is manifestly modern. At this place I found a difficulty which occurred to me whenever I passed under this eastern wall, or through the valley of Jehoshaphat, above which we now stood.—At the bottom of this valley runs the brook Kedron,—or rather, its channel; for I believe water is never seen in it. The valley is about half a mile long, from the village of Siloam to the Garden of Gethsemane. Its rocky sides are full of tombs; and here it is that the Jews expect the Last Judgment to take place, founding their belief on the text (Joel III. 12). "Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit, to judge all the heathen round about." The Mohammedans of Jerusalem have picked up something of this from the Jews; for they show a stone in this, their temple wall, where their Prophet is to sit on the last day, while Christ executes judgment in the valley below. Now, in the time of Herod's temple, there was a sheer descent, from the top of the temple buildings to the brook, of 480 ft. What, the

depth of the valley is now, I can nowhere learn;* but certainly it is nothing like this. And there is such a projection under the wall as to form a terrace and long slope, where the Mohammedans have made a cemetery. Much of this projection may consist of rubbish from the overthrown city; as is the case with the soil on Mount Zion: but it is difficult to see how this side of the valley should ever have been so precipitous as the old accounts make it. At first, I thought that the temple wall might have stood further out than the present wall: but there are the ancient hewn stones to contradict that supposition. The temple buildings on the eastern side being on the wall would give a considerable additional height: and their position, crowning the steep side of the valley, must have been as fine as can be conceived: but how the total height can ever have been 480 ft. it is not easy to see: nor how that side can ever have been wholly precipitous.

Abdallah showed us what is called, against all probability, the Pool of Bethesda. There are three arches at one end, which the stranger is told are the five porches. These arches are walled up: and they, and the whole circuit of walls, are tufted with weeds. All the pools in Palestine are beautiful: and this not less than others. It was measured by Maundrell, and is 120 paces long, forty broad, and not less than eight deep. There is never any water in it now: and there is every reason to suppose it a part of the fosse which once separated

* Dr. Robinson gives the depth of the precipice merely, below the S. E. corner of the wall, at 150 ft. I should have supposed it more: but there is a long slope from the top of the precipice to the base of the wall.—*Biblical Researches*, I., 343.

Mount Moriah from Bezetha. I could not but wish that this might have been Bethesda; but it cannot be reasonably supposed so.

As we returned homewards, with our minds full of what we had seen, we encountered in the street two men fighting about a skin of water. Three others soon joined; and a more desperate combat I never saw. They fought as they might for freedom or life; and all about a skinful of water, which was spilt in the struggle. Here was the Arab "intensity," shown in this childish way!

In the evening the rest of the party went to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to see the washing of the Pilgrims' feet. In Rome, I might have gone to such a spectacle: but here I could not. After having visited such scenes in the morning, and having now Olivet and the rising moon in view from our platform, I could not go to witness mummeries done in the name of Christianity, compared with which the lowest Fetishism on the banks of an African river would have been inoffensive.—Nor would I go the next day to see the miracle of the Greek fire in the same place.—This miracle has now dwindled down into a show so little marvellous that one wonders how long the faith in it will last. Formerly, as everyone knows, miraculous flames used to shoot out, red and green, from apertures on each side of, and behind the altar; and the Pilgrims rushed to light their torches, throwing each other down, and trampling to death more or fewer who could not stand the rush. Moreover, there was a feud between the Greek and Latin Christians about which should remove the covering of the altar after the

ceremony; and lives were lost in this way. When Ibraheem Pasha ruled here, he endeavoured to keep order by going in himself, on one occasion, among the crowd; but he unfortunately fainted; and his soldiers brought him out with great violence. So many lives were lost on that occasion that a considerable modification of the proceedings ensued. The cloth is removed by the Mohammedan governor (a curious transaction of Christian worship!) and now the fire is diffused by torches being handed out of these apertures, and carried round for the Pilgrims to light theirs by,—the fire being still, for the present, called miraculous.

According to the account the gentlemen brought home, the crowd was very dense: the people were kept tolerably quiet by two rows of Turkish soldiers, till the fire appeared: but after the kindling of the pilgrims' torches, the hubbub was terrible to witness. The poor creatures were perfectly frantic, not only shouting and gesticulating, but leaping on one anothers' shoulders. One of my friends, who never uses strong language, told me "it was like a holiday in hell." Such is Christianity at Jerusalem!

We went that day to see David's tomb, or the place of it. A mosque is built over it,—outside the walls,—on Mount Zion. We were not worthy to see the tomb itself,—neither Jew nor Christian being permitted to approach it:—a most galling restriction to the resident Jews! But we saw a procession of Derweeshes going to it. The Santons belonging to this mosque are very great men indeed, the most powerful in Jerusalem;—such great men that they do nothing whatever, and are fed by corn and other good things given them by the

people, on the compulsion of their holiness. Their horses, which awaited them near, were sleek, handsome creatures; and their masters looked much like other well-dressed Mohammedans. They walked in a kind of procession, with rude music, and entered the mosque. —We were told that there was one place in the same building which we might see:—the Cænaculum; the room where Jesus supped with his disciples. It is a very large upper room, dim and cheerless, with a niche at one end, where the Christians occasionally perform mass.—The place is supposed to be an ancient Christian church: but it cannot be what the legend declares it, as all the buildings on the heights of Zion were razed at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. We could not give any more belief to the House of Caiaphas which stands near,—a substantial, blank stone building.

The Armenian Convent, close at hand, has a most gorgeous chapel, but little that is interesting, and much that is painful to see. In Italy, I found the Christian mythology and superstitious observances very distressing to witness: but I could have had no idea how much more painful the spectacle is in Palestine. It is not merely that the simplicity of the actual teachings of Christ comes out most strikingly on the spot where he lived and taught; and that the singleness of his doctrine and the pure monotheism of his own ideas are evident as the daylight to those who have travelled with the Hebrews from Egypt hither, and read their history by local lights, but that in Egypt we had seen the origin of the mythology and superstitions which were engrafted upon Christianity at Alexandria, and in Greece and Rome, and which debase the religion

of Christ at this day. We had seen in Egypt, and in the Greek philosophy which was thence derived, ages before the time of Christ, those allegorical fables of Osiris and his nature and offices, of the descent of the Supreme on earth in a fleshly form, and the deifying or sanctification of intercessors which were unhappily, but very naturally, connected with the simple teachings of Christ by the Platonising converts of various countries, at an early period, and which to this day deform and vitiate the gospel in countries which yet keep clear of the open idolatries of the Greek and Latin churches. The vitiation of the teachings of Christ anywhere, and under the least offensive outward observance, is mournful enough: but here, while Christ, and nature, and history all bid us reverently preserve the purity and simplicity of his teachings, it is truly revolting to meet everywhere, in its extremest rankness, the superstition which the interfusion of the old Egyptian element has caused. Here we have, in these Christian churches, the wrathful "jealous God" of the old Hebrews, together with the propitiating Osiris, the malignant Typho, the Hades, the Purgatory, and the incarnations of the Egyptians and their disciple Pythagoras; the Logos of the Platonists, the incompatible resurrection and immortality of opposing schools, all mingled together, and profanely named after him who came to teach, not "cunningly devised fables," but that men should love their Father in heaven with all their hearts and minds, and their neighbour as themselves. The Egyptian theology and Greek philosophy were proper to their times, and venerable on that account, as the strongest light that men had reached: but, reproduced

with adulterations in Jerusalem, and used to take Christ's name in vain, they were as afflicting as the original records of the ideas in Egypt were interesting. The marks of the kissing of the tomb of St. James in this Armenian convent showed what the quality of the devotion here was.—The different churches in Jerusalem divide among them the objects which attract strangers. In this convent are shown the stone which closed the Holy Sepulchre; the "prison of Christ;" the spot where Peter denied his Lord, and the court where the cock crew: this being on the opposite side of the city from Fort Antonia and the residence of Pilate! The Armenian Patriarchs of Jerusalem are buried here: and near, are the cemeteries of all the Christian convents, where it is interesting to read the names of Englishmen who, without the wish entertained by pious Jews, have been destined to find their long rest here.

Near this place, just within the Zion Gate, are the huts of the Lepers. We passed them many times, and never without seeing the poor outcasts, sitting by the wayside to ask charity. All their lives long, they have no society beyond their own miserable company: and these intermarry, so that there are children born into their cursed life; born to give their parents something to hope for a few years, and then to show the disease, and die by inches under it.

Returning by the Jew Quarter, we looked into the synagogue,—I finding my way to the women's gallery, to the great surprise of some Jewesses who were gossipping on the ground, not far off. Only one woman was in the gallery; and nothing interesting was going forward.

When the gentlemen returned from church, the next day, (Sunday, April 4th,) we enjoyed a delightful ramble. We left the city by the Damascus gate, and came to one of those beautiful pools which I was always glad to fall in with. It is called the Sheep-pool; and it lies dim under arches in the rock, whence hang long strings of weeds, ready to wave with the first breath of wind. An Arab was filling his waterskins there, his red tarboosh casting a light in among the shadowy waters and green ferns. I ran down to this pool, whenever we passed that way; and I always found some such picture there.

Our present object was the Cave of Jeremiah, to which we approached over the open field. We were now on the ground of Titus's camp. Here lay "the abomination of desolation" at that terrible time. Here rang the armour and sounded the heavy tread of the cohorts; and here the ground shook when the wooden towers of the Romans were pushed up against the walls, that Jew and Roman might fight face to face from the walls and from these towers. This was the only side on which the city could be attacked, the other three being surrounded by ravines. On this north side therefore the whole army was encamped, except one legion which occupied the lower slope of the Mount of Olives. I believe it is concluded that the northern wall corresponds to the outermost of the three walls on that side which inclosed the city in those days: and indeed there is but a narrow sinking of the ground, little more than a trench, between the wall and the high ground. On these slopes, and some way back into the country, lay the lines of Roman

tents, where now the whole ground was sheeted with young barley, and clumped and sprinkled over with olive trees. In a deep rural stillness, and passing among springing crops and fruitful orchards, we crossed this great military site, till we came to the silent rock-retreat which is named after Jeremiah.

The door was fast; and we knocked in vain. But on another occasion we obtained admission, and saw what we should have been sorry to have missed. This wonderful retreat is entered by a door cut in the south face of a rocky hill; which face seems to be artificially opened. The grotto itself appears to occupy the whole interior of the hill. A painter would find subjects for years within that door,—among the black, brown and grey rocks, the shadowy caverns, and brilliant projections, where light falls in all imaginable caprices. The whole would be too sombre,—almost as gloomy as the meditations of Jeremiah,—but for the weeds which here again cast in their vivid green to relieve the sense, and amuse the eye by the tossing of their tufts and ladders and garlands. This grotto is not a single cave, but a spacious set of caverns, separated by natural partitions, and rude pillars and intercolumnar screens. There is a whole nest of vaulted chapels or dwellings, crypts, and chambers, at hand,—accessible, I believe, only by the one portal in the hill side. The Latin monks occasionally perform mass in the cavern: and this was all we could learn about the place.

We were determined not to be disappointed of our reading to-day; and so we gave Abdallah to understand. He placed himself within hearing, and watched us with an appearance of strong curiosity. From the

Cave, we had come round under the walls to the eastern side, where we found in the Turkish cemetery, some scanty shade, where we could sit, and look and listen. Here we read the whole of the gospel of Matthew which relates to scenes and events in Jerusalem or the neighbourhood. Behind us was the inclosure where the temple stood. At our feet, the ground sloped steeply down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat. In the depth of the valley was the channel of the brook Kedron, and on its opposite bank, far below to the left, was the Garden of Gethsemane, with its hoary olives. Before us uprose the long slope of Olivet, over which, to the right, slanted the road to Bethany. When, in my youth, I used to pore over the four gospels, trying to make a Harmony and a map on paper, and pictures in my mind, how little did I dream that I should sit and read the record here, under the temple wall, and find many things made so wonderfully clear! And O! how simple, how familiar, how *cheerful*, (yet all the more pathetic for that) are his teachings, when read in the presence of their illustrations, in comparison with the solemn delivery of them, cut up into verses, in our churches, and even our family circles at home! The biblical scholar may owe much to that device of Robert Stevens's,—much convenience for reference,—but, as for the rest of the world, it seems as if it would have been better for us that Robert Stevens should have slept all the way from Lyons to Paris, than that he should have spent his time in cutting up the Bible, in a vast hurry, into verses. Happily, there are paragraph bibles still to be had; though too few seem to prefer the use of them.

Nothing struck us more than the space and vastness everywhere about us. The commonest disappointment of all in seeing places which one has dreamed of all one's life, or remembered from childhood, is to find everything so small. My idea of Jerusalem was of a city nearly surrounded with dells, with a mere rising ground for the Mount of Olives. But as we sat among the tombs to-day, the wayfarers on the Bethany road, and the horsemen in the valley below, and the goat-herds on the slope of Olivet, were diminished to the size of people on the sea shore, seen from a lofty cliff. From a mere glance round, one would have said that we had the whole scene nearly to ourselves; but, when we came to consider, there were many people within sight, and they appeared so few only on account of the scale of the surrounding objects. The village of Siloam was on the opposite hill, about half a mile away to the right; and I watched the progress of two horsemen from before it to the point of road near us, ascending to the city. I was surprised to see how slow appeared their progress, and how small their size below; and how long they were in winding up the hill on which we sat. The gaping tombs in the opposite rocks looked mere holes.—The winding away of the valley southwards was exceedingly beautiful, with its red rocks and dim olive groves, and sloping fields and craggy, terraced hills, till the distant heights overlapped, and screened from us the blue Moab mountains.

In returning, we skirted the city southwards, and entered by the Zion gate. The trees of the Armenian convent garden tempted us in: but we found nothing worth looking at, and brought away only a few roses

and poor geraniums. We had not yet set foot on the Mount of Olives, or crossed the Kedron. These and some other sacred places we were to explore a few days hence, on our return from an expedition to the Jordan and the Dead Sea.

CHAPTER IV.

BETHANY.—PLAIN OF JERICHO.—ELISHA'S SPRING.—JERICHO.—THE JORDAN.—THE DEAD SEA.—CONVENT OF SANTA SABA.

On Monday, April 5th, we were on horseback early for our rendezvous in the valley of Jehoshaphat. The party were to meet at Job's Tomb; and a large company we appeared when assembled. Our Desert comrades were all there; and four strangers,—European gentlemen who had asked permission to ride with us, on account of the insecurity of the roads. Our servants, tents and kitchens were there, as we had to spend two nights away from Jerusalem; and ten well-armed guards escorted us. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho is as dangerous from thieves as ever it was. There is not a worse road in Palestine: but our caravan was too large to be attacked by any band of robbers; and we hardly saw a human figure, except at the wells, the whole way, after leaving Bethany.

It was about nine o'clock when we began to wind up the camel road to Bethany, which led us over the eastern ridge of Olivet. As soon as we had passed the ridge, Bethany came in view, lying on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, and, as everybody knows, "fifteen furlongs" distant from Jerusalem. It is now a village

inhabited by about twenty families; a very poor place; but looking less squalid than might be expected, from its houses being built, as everywhere in that country, of stone;—square, substantial, and large dwellings, compared with village abodes elsewhere. Its position on the side of the hill is very fine, seen from below. —The moment of interest, however, is in crossing the ridge above, when one is about to lose sight of Jerusalem, towering on its Zion behind, and to drop down into the village, which lies so quietly among its olive groves and fields. This is the spot for remembering who it was that was so glad to come hither and rest: to place that ridge between himself and the doomed city, which was revelling in her Pharisaic pride, ready to stone him who was sent unto her; to leave behind all that pride and peril, and come here to repose among friends, and open his human affections to Lazarus and his sisters.

We were desired to dismount, just above Bethany, to visit what the monks call the Tomb of Lazarus. Without supposing it to be that, we found it interesting, as a really ancient tomb. It was so small, that few of us went down; but I wished to see the whole of it. A few steep and difficult steps brought me down into a small vaulted chamber; and two or three more very deep and narrow steps led to the lower chamber where the body was laid. We questioned whether there was room for more than one body. In exploring tombs in this country, whether such as this, or the more picturesque and natural burial-places in the branching caverns of the limestone rocks, I often wished that the old painters had enjoyed our opportunities,—for the sake of art as

well as truth: and then we should have had representations of Lazarus coming forth from chambers in the rock, instead of rising from such a grave as we see dug in European churchyards. The limestone rocks, full of caverns, now used as dwellings for men and cattle, were of old those "chambers of the grave" which puzzled our childhood by that name: and it is a great privilege to have seen them, so as to understand how the dead were said to be calling to each other; and how the stone was rolled away from the mouth of the sepulchres, and how Jesus could have cried with a loud voice for the dead to come forth. After having visited these places, how vivid is the picture of such scenes! How the voice echoes through those dim "chambers of the tomb," and is answered by the dead man appearing in his cerements,—appearing from the end of the passage, or in the shadow of the recess!

The monks, when taken as guides, show in the village the house of Martha and Mary, as they pretend, and that of Simon the Leper: but we did not inquire for these, having no wish to mix up anything fabulous with our observations of a place so interesting as Bethany.

Our road led us to the bottom of the valley, where there were patches of cultivation on the stony soil. We rode for three or four miles, sometimes on the one hill and sometimes on the other; and then we began to ascend the hot and rough and dreary road where begin the dangers of the way "from Jerusalem to Jericho;" —where the traveller enters among the fastnesses of the thieves who have infested the road from time immemorial. There is a hollow way which is considered the most dangerous of all. Here Sir Frederick Henniker

was stripped and left for dead by robbers in 1820. His servants fled and hid themselves on the first alarm. When they returned, he was lying naked and bleeding on the sultry road. They put him on a horse, and carried him to Jericho, where he found succour. Perhaps he was thinking of the parable of the Samaritan when this accident befel him. I was thinking of it almost every step of the way.—Another beautiful story was presently after full in my mind;—a catholic legend which was told me by a German friend in America, when I little dreamed of ever being on the spot. Our road now gradually ascended the high ridge from which we were soon to overlook the plain of Jericho. The track was so stony and difficult as to make our progress very slow: and the white rocks under the midday sun gave out such heat and glare as made me enter more thoroughly into the story of Peter and the cherries than my readers can perhaps do. And yet the many to whom I have told the legend in conversation have all felt its beauty. It is this.

Jesus and two or three of his disciples went down, one summer day, from Jerusalem to Jericho. Peter,—the ardent and eager Peter,—was, as usual, by the Teacher's side. On the road on Olivet lay a horse-shoe, which the Teacher desired Peter to pick up, but which Peter let lie, as he did not think it worth the trouble of stooping for. The Teacher stooped for it, and exchanged it in the village for a measure of cherries. These cherries he carried (as eastern men now carry such things) in the bosom-folds of his dress.*

* "Good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom."—Luke VI. 38.

When they had to ascend the ridge, and the road lay between heated rocks, and over rugged stones, and among glaring white dust, Peter became tormented with heat and thirst, and fell behind. Then the Teacher dropped a ripe cherry at every few steps; and Peter eagerly stooped for them. When they were all done, Jesus turned to him, and said with a smile, "He who is above stooping to a small thing, will have to bend his back to many lesser things."

From the ridge, we had a splendid view of the plain of the Jordan. It lay, apparently as flat as a table, to the base of the Moab mountains opposite, and to the Dead Sea, to our right,—the south. The surrounding mountains were dressed in the soft hues which such an atmosphere alone can exhibit. The plain was once as delicious a region as ever men lived in. Josephus calls it a "divine region;" and tells of its miles of gardens and palm groves. Here grew the balsam which was worth its own weight in silver, and was a treasure for which the kings of the East made war. Cleopatra sent a commission, to bring some balsam plants to Egypt. The whole valley or plain was studded with towns; and every town was embosomed in verdure, as Damascus is now. Jericho was but one of a hundred neighbouring cities: but it was distinguished above others by the name of the City of Palm trees: and now, travellers dispute about where Jericho stood! From our height, we saw a low square tower rising above some wood, a few miles off: and this tower is by many said to be the only remaining fragment of the old city: while others suppose its site to be at the base of the hills we were now on, and refer to Jericho the remains

of an aqueduct, and the walls and arches which are scattered about these bare and rocky eminences. The scene is indeed very desolate now. The plain is barren, except for the strip of verdure,—broad, sinuous, and thickly wooded,—which runs through the midst, marking the channel of the river. The palms are gone, and the sycamores, and the honey which the wild bees made in the hollows of their stems. The fruits and the sugar canes are gone; and instead of these, we now find little but tall reeds, thorny-acacias, and trees barren of blossom or fruit. The verdant strip is, however, beautiful from afar;—beautiful for itself, and because it indicates where the Jordan flows. It indicates too that the plain might still be fertile. Whenever men shall be living there who are wise enough, and free enough, to be friends with Nature, the plain may again be as rich as it once was.

The peculiarities of the plain of the Jordan are not such as can disappear within any moderate lapse of time, or be permanently affected by changes in the conduct of men. The natural features of the country have here, as in Egypt and elsewhere, much affected and determined the character and life of their inhabitants. The hills which inclose the plain, both to the east and west, have a much steeper and longer descent to the Jordan valley than on their outer sides. In other words, the valley is extraordinarily depressed. According to Russegger, the level of the Dead Sea is between 1300 and 1400 feet lower than the Mediterranean: and the supposed site of Jericho itself, 774 ft. The consequence of this depression of a well-watered district is that the plain has a tropical climate and

aspect; and that its inhabitants had a tropical constitution and habits. They became, in course of time, by living among their cane-brakes and palm-groves, as unlike their brethren of the eastern tribes who led their flocks over the high table-lands, as if they had been of a different race. The history of the sinewy, well-braced, roving eastern tribes is therefore conspicuously different, throughout the Old Testament, from that of the soft and indolent dwellers in the valley. It is significantly remarked, in the History of the Hebrew Monarchy,* that "the actual rulers of the country appear at every time to have dwelt on the higher grounds."

The descent was truly like a plunge into the tropics; and for two days from that moment, we suffered more from the heat than, I think, during any part of our travels. The murkiness of the air was also remarkable: not only a steaming heat, but a heavy thickness which deadened the sun and the waters, and our spirits and breathing. This increased much as we approached the Dead Sea, the next day: but it was very perceptible from the moment we descended into the plain.

As I checked my horse on the summit, and looked over the plain, I could not help sending a searching gaze after the Jordan, though I well knew that it lay below three terraces,—"down in a hole," as a recent visitor had told us. I could trace its course by the sinuous line of wood: but for the rest, I must wait another day.—There was another stream to be visited first. It may be remembered that, once upon a time, "the men of Jericho said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray

* A History of the Hebrew Monarchy, p. 5.

thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth; but the water is naught, and the ground barren:" * and it may be remembered how the story goes on,—how Elisha healed the waters, that there should not be from thence any more death or barren land: and that "the waters were healed unto this day." Another strip of woodland marked the course of this spring of Elisha's, about a mile, I think, from the base of the hills we were on. Here we were to encamp.

The descent was like an irregular stair-case: it was so steep that almost every one dismounted: but the heat was so excessive that I was disposed to keep my seat if possible. When I glanced up from the bottom, and saw the last of the party arrive on the ridge, and prepare to begin the descent, it looked so fearful that I was glad to turn away.

One of the most baseless traditions of the Holy Land adheres to this spot. The mountain immediately to our left in descending is supposed to be the Mount of Temptation. It was probably first fixed upon from its commanding the richest part of the country,—the best local example of "the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them." This mountain is called Quarantania. In its rocky face are square holes—the entrances of caves: and hither come, every year, devotees,—some from a great distance,—to dwell for forty days in this waste place, barely supporting themselves by such roots and herbs as they can find. Some of these caves are generally inhabited by the robbers who give such a bad name to the district.

We had not travelled far over the sands and among

* 2 Kings, II. 19.

the bushes of the plain, when we saw our tents pitched in the most delicious spot, beyond all comparison, that had yet occurred for our encampment. Till now, we had nowhere seen forest-scenery. Here it was,—on the banks of Elisha's stream,—now called Ain Sultân. The clear, rushing waters flowed away under the spreading branches of gnarled old trees; and there were thickets beyond, where the mules and horses could scarcely force their way. The green and golden sheeted lights, and broad shadows on the stream were to our eyes like water to the desert-traveller. "As You Like It" was in my head all day; for here was an exact realisation of my conception of the forest-haunts of Rosalind and Jaques. I need not say that it was equally unlike anything I had looked for in the Holy Land. Our tent was close upon the stream; but the heat was so excessive that we could not bear the tent, and had our dinner-table placed under a tree, whose roots were washed by the brook. Other parties of our comrades were dining, or lying on the banks of the stream: and the Arabs sat in groups near the tents. Every encampment of travellers in these wild places is beautiful: but I never saw one so beautiful as this.

After dinner, we went to the ruins, at the foot of Quarantania. In several directions, we saw traces of foundation walls; and on the hill side was the fragment of an aqueduct; and below, some vaulted recesses, remains of square edifices, and many strewn stones: but nothing to mark the site of a very ancient or extensive city.—The holes in the strata of the precipices looked so like Petra, that some of us wished to climb up to them: but the chief of our escort, the Sheikh of

the district, stepped in the way, barred the passage, and drew his sword across his throat, to convey that robbers were there. He told the dragoman that being responsible for our safety, he could let no one go to the caves.

I had before traced the stream up to its source,—about a quarter of a mile from our tent. The spring bubbled up under some bushes, and spread, clear and shallow, into a little pond, where some hewn stones were scattered about, seeming to show that the source had once been built over. When we returned from Quarantania, and the toils of the day were over, Miss —— and I stole away to the spring to bathe. We found each a drooping tree which made a close dressing-room; and I trusted to find some spot where the water was deep enough for our purpose. Under a tree, I found a pool chin deep; and there, in that quiet spot, where there was no sound but the rustle and dip of the boughs overhead, we bathed,—shaking off the fatigues of a hot and toilsome day. It was dusk when we came out, and a lustrous planet hung over the nearest hill.

The Eastern traveller feels a strong inclination to bathe in every sacred sea, river and spring. We had done it in Arabia; and now the interest grew as we visited places more and more familiar to our knowledge and imagination. How strong the interest is, and how like that of a new baptism, those at home may not be able to imagine; and such may despise the superstition which leads hundreds of pilgrims every year to rush into the Jordan. But, among all the travellers who visit the Jordan, is there one, however far removed

from superstition, who is willing to turn away without having bowed his head in its sacred waters?

There was no moon to-night: but the stars were glorious when I came out of our tent to take one more look before retiring to rest. Here and there, the watch-fires cast yellow gleams on the trees and waters: but there were reaches of the brook, still and cool, where the stars glittered like fragments of moonlight. This day stands in my journal as one of the most delicious of our travels.

In the morning of the next day (April 6th) about five o'clock, I ascended a steep mound near our encampment, and saw a view as different from that of the preceding day as a change of lights could make it. The sun had not risen; but there was a hint of its approach in a gush of pale light behind the Moab mountains. The strip of wood-land in the middle of the plain looked black in contrast with the brightening yellow precipices of Quarantania on the west. Southwards, the Dead Sea stretched into the land, grey and clear. Below me, our tents and horses, and the moving figures of the Arabs enlivened the shadowy banks of the stream.

We were off soon after six, and were to reach the Jordan in two hours and a half. Our way lay through the same sort of forest land as we had encamped in. It was very wild; and almost the only tokens of habitation that we met with were about Rihhah,—supposed to be the site of the ancient Jericho. This is now as miserable a village as any in Palestine; and its inhabitants are as low in character as in wealth. No stranger thinks of going near it who is not well armed and

guarded. What a change from the former days, when this was the garden of the known world,—this valley extending through the heart of Palestine! Here, where we now saw only a few fig trees and a mere sprinkling of young crops,—here, where the luxuriance of the vegetation shows that the soil and climate are not to blame for the desolation,—here was once the crowded city which submitted to Joshua: here were the fields which fed whole armies of Syrians and Egyptians as they passed to and fro. And here, in a later day, as people sat abroad in the cool of the evening, every man under his own vine or his own fig tree, did news circulate from one neighbourly group to another which soon filled the whole valley. It had been for some time known that a young man,—very young to assume to be a prophet,—had been living in the Desert, a few miles to the south. He was probably a disciple of the Essenes, reared in their large community near the Dead Sea, and not very far from hence. The anchorites of that sect and district did not usually betake themselves to the hard life of the wilderness till their frames were strong to bear hunger, heat and cold. But this new preacher had hardly a beard upon his chin; and his young face made him so little like the popular conception of a Hebrew prophet, that his claims were much discussed, and many went out to endeavour to meet him; and under the trees here, at eventide, they reported what they had seen and heard.—What they had heard most about was Repentance; a theme so old that men had become careless of it, and now needed a new awakening. Every Hebrew child knew, from his infancy upwards, that the Messiah would not come till

the nation had repented of its prevalent vices, and of every infidelity to Jehovah: and yet, though there was much expectation of the Messiah appearing before long, these words about repentance passed over the popular ear, without rousing the nation's soul; and it needed the appearance of one crying in the Desert to make them apprehend that the axe must be laid to the root of every wickedness among them. The doctrine preached was that of the Essenes;—that a man who had two coats and food enough should give to him that had none: that the tax-gatherers should be moderate, and exact no perquisites; and that the soldiers should cherish peace among their neighbours and contentment in themselves. The practice with which the prophet sanctified the resolutions of the penitent was also eminently Essene. It was common among all the Jews to baptize,—proceeding upon the words of their Prophets,—"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes:"*—"then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you;"†—in literal obedience to such teachings, all the Jewish sects practised baptism: but none with such care and observance as the Essenes. The precepts and the practice were not new: but, given out now by a devout young prophet, worthy of the wild olden time, and at a season when every Hebrew mother looked upon her infant son as possibly the Messiah, there was abundant reason why the talk at eventide should be of this John. In the course of ten years, the curiosity and interest must

* Isaiah, I. 16. † Ezekiel, XXXVI. 25.

have somewhat subsided; but yet must, on the whole, have been the chief topic of the time. Many households, and a multitude of individuals, had no doubt reformed themselves, and were waiting, in the spirit of faith and the practice of purity, for the coming of a greater than the prophet. With these the interest would be fully kept alive. And the opulent citizens of the distant towns, passing this way to Jerusalem at the time of the Feasts, would stop to learn how they might find the new Prophet, and would return, grave because he had told them to give of their wealth to those who had none. The tax-gatherers, encountering him in their rounds, would depart rebuked, and hear the whisper among the people that the days for paying tribute would soon be over, when the Messiah should have driven out the Romans, and established his own kingdom upon Zion. And Herod's soldiers must have passed this way, going to and from Fort Machœrus on the Dead Sea; and the exhortations to them would become known, and would be gratefully remembered by the rural inhabitants whom soldiers are wont to oppress. And the prophet himself would be seen at times, even in this fertile and peopled district. The cultivator, going out early to watch his field, in dread of the locust-swarm, now that the south-wind was strong, finding his fears too just, would see the prophet lighting his fire of green wood, to bring down the locusts, and save the neighbouring crops. And at noon-day, when the bees are all abroad, and man seeks the shade, the wayfarer, resting in the woods, would see the anchorite busy withdrawing the honeycomb from the bole of an old sycamore; and the two would

draw near, and take their noon-tide meal together, and converse of him who should come: and then before night, how far would every word be known that the prophet had said!—Again, he must pass by this way to some of the stations on the Jordan where he was wont to baptise: and, though he had been occasionally seen for ten years, none could carelessly let him pass by.

At last, among the many who were allowed carelessly to pass by, among the peasants and artisans who inquired at this place where John was at that time baptising, came One, in appearance and lowliness like the rest, purposing to be baptised like them, and in fact for some time afterwards a disciple of the prophet. The dwellers here would not know for some months after that they had spoken with one greater than the anchorite of the Desert: and when they heard that another had risen up, whose disciples were baptising more converts than John, they would endeavour to remember what dignified personage, with his train, had here inquired the way, and let fall words of promise of his coming power and kingdom: and they would differ about which was he; and some would go forth to see him, and recognise him: and when they saw him, some would recal that countenance and voice; and most would go back when they found it was only a carpenter of Nazareth, asking how one so lowly, and so little prepared for war and conquest, should drive out the Romans, and restore the kingdom to Israel:—how it was possible for a teacher of the non-resistant doctrines of the Essenes, and for a poor inhabitant of the rural province of Galilee to set up a throne on Zion: and then ensued those domestic dissensions,—that parental

prejudice conflicting with youthful enthusiasm, which made the parent deliver over the child to destruction, and the child forsake the parent, and exhibited the truth that this Messenger of Peace had at first brought not peace but a sword. Here, in this rich district, peopled with indolent and luxurious inhabitants, had this stir begun and spread, which was never to cease till the plain of Jordan had become the waste that we saw it now. By degrees, the landmarks were destroyed and forgotten: the woods decayed, and no more were planted. The rains descended and the floods came, and swept away the dwellings; and none built them up again. The swallow made a nest for herself on the household altars, and the wild beasts came up at the swelling of Jordan: the sands swept over the field, and the salt gales from the southern lake encrusted the herbage, and poisoned the soil; and robbers of another race came to live in the caves of the hills, and made the passage to the Jordan as dreary and perilous as we saw it this day, while that Nazarene artisan came to be worshipped as a god over a wide continent, and in far islands of the sea. It was a vast chapter of human history which unrolled itself before us here beside the one remaining tower which is pointed out as marking the site of the ancient Jericho.

And now we were eager for the river, though, as I said before, we had been warned that we could not see it till it should appear flowing at our very feet. We were aware of our approach, by the three terraces we had to cross, which are distinctly marked. Each was level, and then a small slope led down to the next. On a hillock on the first terrace, where the vegetation

showed that here might once have been placed the flourishing home of some inhabitant of the valley, were perched a few birds among the brushwood; birds of such a size that one of our party thoughtlessly cried out "Ostriches!" There are no ostriches here: but these cranes might easily be mistaken for them. One by one they rose, flapping their great wings, and stretching out their long legs behind them, and sailed away towards the Dead Sea.

From the formation of the ground, as well as from some of the ancient language about Jordan, it appears as if the river had once been subject to inundations, which might have caused the exuberant fertility of the plain in former days: but it is not so now. The force with which it rushes down the descent from the Lake of Tiberias to the Dead Sea has, in course of centuries, so deepened its channel as that it rarely rises above its banks. It gushes along in its deep bed among the woodland, and now and then stands in among the stems of the trees: but it is not upon record that it has reached the second terrace in its fullest seasons; and its depth varies much in different years, as well as in different seasons of every year. Till we came to the brakes on its very banks, all was as dry as if no wave had ever touched it.

Our guides led us towards the spot which is cleared for the baptism of the Easter Pilgrims: and the first intimation which I had of our arrival was from some of the party dismounting at the Pilgrims' Beach. When I came up, O! how beautiful it was!—how much more beautiful than all pictures and all descriptions had led me to expect! The only drawback was that the stream

was turbid;—not only whitish, from a sulphureous admixture, but muddy. But it swept nobly along, with a strong and rapid current, and many eddies, gushing between the opposite limestone face and the woodland on our bank, now smiting the white rock, and now flowing in among the tall reeds, and now winding away out of sight behind the poplars and spreading acacias and sycamores of the promontories to the south. It is a narrow river; but it is truly majestic from its force and loveliness. The vigorous, upspringing character of the wood along its margin struck me much; and we saw it now in its vivid spring green.

The Pilgrims' Beach is a shelving bit of shore, kept bare for their approach: and here, with something like Arab "intensity," they rush in in such numbers, and with so little precaution, that some are drowned every year. This year, it was spoken of as a remarkable circumstance that only one was drowned. It must be a fearful sight,—the old people carried away by the crowd and the current from their slimy footing near the shore, and the women and children from their hold upon the overhanging branches: and when once they are swept among the eddies, there is no chance for any but strong swimmers. Whatever superstition there might be in us, there was none of the wild kind which drives the Greek and Latin pilgrims thus headlong into the stream. We wished to bathe, but we did it in safety. The ladies went north; the gentlemen south. I made a way through the thicket with difficulty till I found a little cove which the current scarcely disturbed, and over which hung a sycamore whose lower branches dipped into the water. One might bathe here without

touching the mud which lay soft and deep beneath. The limestone precipice opposite, garlanded with weeds, and the wooded promontory which shot out below made the river particularly beautiful here; and sorry I was to leave it when the time came for us to mount and proceed.

It is useless to attempt to make out where the baptism of Jesus took place, or where were the stations at which his disciples and John administered the rite. If there were monks on the spot, no doubt every locality would be specified with the utmost precision. Happily, the river flows on, free from any desecration of the kind. We had it to ourselves, and wished for nothing beyond what we saw. We know that the Glad Tidings once spread along its whole course, echoed from rock to rock, whispered from thicket to thicket, wherever there were human hearts on the watch: and the whole region is so sweet and sacred that we felt it enough to have touched the river in any point.

One thing more we did: we remembered friends at home, and in lands as far from home as home is from the Jordan. We carried away some of the water in tin cases provided for the purpose. This being done, we were summoned to horse, and rode away southwards to the Dead Sea.

The belt of woodland soon turned eastwards, and we found ourselves exposed to extreme heat, on a desolate plain, crusted with salt, and cracked with drought. There had been a closeness and murkiness in the air, all the morning, which was very oppressive; and now it was, at our slow pace, almost intolerable. I put my horse to a fast canter, and crossed the plain as quickly

as possible, finding this pace a relief to my horse, as well as myself. One and another came galloping up, to obtain the same advantage, and our group reached the shore some time before the bulk of the party. The horses hastened to the bright clear water, and seemed to be deceived by its apparent freshness, for they put down their noses repeatedly, and as often drew back in disgust. The drift on the beach looked dreary enough: ridges of broken canes and willow twigs washed up, and lying among the salt, and the little unwholesome swamps of the shore. The scene was really solemn in its dreariness; the retiring mountains on either hand being wholly bare,—of a dull gray with purple shadows, —hot and parched to the last degree. The curious lights which hung immoveable over the surface of the waters struck me as showing an unusual state of the atmosphere,—the purple haze resting on one part, and the line of silvery refraction in another. Though the sky was clear after the morning clouds had passed away, the sunshine appeared dim; and the heat was most oppressive.—I tasted the limpid water, which looked as if it could not be nauseous. I took only about two drops; but I thought I should never again get rid of the taste. It is salt beyond all notions one can form of saltness; and bitter and fetid. And this is the water that poor Costigan's coffee was made of!

Costigan was a young Irishman, whose mind was set upon exploring the Dead Sea, and giving the world the benefit of his discoveries. It would have been a useful service; and he had zeal and devotedness enough for it. But he wanted either knowledge or prudence; and he lost his life in the adventure, without having left us any

additional information whatever. He sent a small boat overland, on camels' backs, to the Lake of Tiberias, and in this he set forth (in an open boat in the month of July!) with only one attendant—a Maltese servant. They followed the Jordan, entered the Dead Sea, and reached its southern end, not without hardship and difficulty. But the fatal struggle was in returning. The wind did not often favour them; and once it blew such a squall that they threw overboard whatever came to hand: and the first thing that the servant threw over was their only cask of fresh water. They were now compelled to row for their lives, to reach the Jordan before they perished with thirst; but the sun scorched them from a cloudless sky, and the air was like that of a furnace. When Costigan could row no further, his servant made some coffee from the water of the lake: and then they lay down in the boat to die. But the man once more roused himself, and by many efforts brought the boat to the head of the lake. They lay helpless for a whole day on that burning shore, unable to do more than throw the salt water over each other from time to time. The next morning, the servant crawled away, in hopes of reaching Rihhah, which he did with extreme difficulty. He sent Costigan's horse down to the shore, with a supply of water. The poor young man was alive; and he was carried to Jerusalem in the coolness of the night. He was taken care of in the Latin convent there; but he died in two days. During those hours of lingering, he never spoke of his enterprise; and not a note concerning it was ever found among his effects. Any knowledge that he might have gained has perished with him; and no

reliable information could be obtained from his servant. Costigan's grave is in the Armenian burying-ground; and there I saw the stone which tells his melancholy story. He died in 1835.—Another victim to Dead Sea enterprise has perished since we were there,—I believe from drought and other hardship: and now there is a rumour of a new expedition for this year. It is difficult to imagine why it should not succeed, if the arrangements are made with any prudence. If a decked boat can really be conveyed to the Lake; and if there are comrades enough in her to divide the labour and cheer each other; and if they understand the management of a boat in a gusty lake, and are well supplied with provisions and water,—conditions indispensable to every enterprise of the kind,—one does not see why they should fail. I am not aware that any accidents have happened from the difficulty of the navigation of the Dead Sea, or from any singular causes of peril. The excessive heat may be avoided by choosing the most favourable season of the year; and it must be possible to take provisions and water enough, supposing the Lake to be of the largest extent yet conjectured. Some modern scientific travellers, who have surveyed it from various surrounding heights, declare its length not to exceed thirty miles: while Josephus says it is 72½, and Pliny 100 miles long. Its basin has probably contracted in length, in the course of ages.

There appears to be no satisfactory evidence as to whether any fish are to be found in the Dead Sea. Our guides said that some small black fish have been seen there; but others deny this. A dead fish has been found on the shore near the spot where the

Jordan enters the lake; but this might have been cast up by the overflow of the river. It is said that small birds do not fly over this lake, on account of the deleterious nature of its atmosphere. About small birds I cannot speak; but I saw two or three vultures winging their way down it obliquely.—As for the quality of the water,—those of the gentlemen who stayed behind to bathe declared, on rejoining us at lunch time, that they had found the common report of the buoyancy of the water of this sea not at all exaggerated, and that it was indeed an easy matter to float in it, and very difficult to sink. They also found their hair and skin powdered with salt when dry. But they could not admit the greasiness or stickiness which is said to adhere to the skin after bathing. They were positive about this; and they certainly did observe the fact very carefully. Yet I have seen, since my return, a clergyman who bathed there, and who declared to me that his skin was so sticky for some days afterwards that he could not get rid of the feeling, even from his hands. And Dr. Robinson says, "After coming out, I perceived nothing of the salt crust upon the body, of which so many speak. There was a slight pricking sensation, especially where the skin had been chafed; and a sort of greasy feeling, as of oil, upon the skin, which lasted for several hours."* The contrast of these testimonies, and the diversity which exists among the analyses of the waters which have been made by chemists, seem to show that the quality of the waters of the Dead Sea varies. And it appears reasonable that it should; for it must make a great difference

* Biblical Researches, II. 213.

whether fresh waters have been pouring into the basin of the lake, over various soils, after the winter rains, or a great evaporation has been going on under the summer's sun. In following the margin of the sea, we had to cross a creek, where my skirt was splashed. These splashes turned presently to thin crusts of salt; and the moisture and stickiness were as great a week afterwards as at the moment.

We wound among salt marshes and brakes, and round hillocks feathered with flowering reeds, and got into the bed of a stream, under the flecked shade of a shrub, to rest till the bathers overtook us. We were rather dismayed to find that we were still four or five hours from the convent of Santa Saba, where we were to stop for the night. The way was an almost continuous ascent, and in many parts a very steep one. We had to mount, from the deep depression of the valley of the Jordan, to some of the highest ground in Judea. We followed the ravine through which the Kedron runs (or did when it had any water) into the Dead Sea, —some of our party taking the right hand ridge and others the left. In a little while, the limestone hills below looked most fantastic,—completely answering to our idea of the abodes of the first Christian hermits. I wished we could have known where the great Essene establishment of the time of John was placed: but I hope it was in a spot less desolate than any now before our eyes. By degrees the Jordan valley opened northwards, and the Dead Sea southwards, till the extent traversed by the eye was vast. How beautiful it must have been once, when the Jordan valley, whose verdure was now shrunk to a black line amidst the sands, was

like an interminable garden, and when the cities of the plain stood bright and busy where the Dead Sea now lay blank and gray! As I looked back from a great elevation, I thought that so mournful a landscape, for one having real beauty, I had never seen.

I bade adieu many times over to the Dead Sea; for it reappeared unexpectedly again and again. Up and up we went, for four hours, over stony hills, and winding round the bases of others, and through defiles, and over stretches of table land, scantily grassed; and then up hills again, following tracks which were at times hardly perceptible; but from point to point catching a view of the Dead Sea, till we seemed to command its whole length. At last, it lay like a great pond among its hot mountains, its deep blue paled into a grey, with streaks of white light above it, wherever there was a dark back ground. It is a singular object from such an elevation.

The approach to the Convent of Santa Saba is wonderful. The tracks became so clear as to show that we were approaching water and habitations. They led now down to the dry bed of Kedron, and now up the sides of its ravine, till we entered upon a road cut out of the rock, and fenced with a wall of loose stones on the side next the gorge. This road overhangs the ravine for, I think, about two miles. The sides of the chasm are very precipitous; but the grassy ledges here and there show that they were once terraced: and fragments of walls near the innumerable holes in the rocks show the traveller that here he is in the midst of the haunts of the old anchorites. The monks say that ten thousand of them lived here: and

some old writers declare that there were fourteen thousand in Santa Saba's time. What a place to live in!—so hot and dreary at best, and most awful in tempest! In such storms as belong to this country, this gorge must be like the day of doom;—no room for the lightning, and the thunder rolling continuously, as the echoes will not let it die! Cyril, the Monk of Jerusalem, and John Damascenus, and Euphemius lived here; and here young devotees were sent, to try whether they could bear monastic life in its severest form.

Saint Saba was a monk of the fourth century, who had great powers of attraction, if, as is declared, he drew hither fourteen thousand anchorites, and enticed waters from the hard rock. There is a spring in a cavern at the bottom of the gorge which he created miraculously for the use of his followers in this parched region. The monks of his convent live under a very severe rule, never eating flesh, and mortifying their feelings of Christian compassion by never admitting any woman within their gates, under any stress of weather or other accident. There are handsome accommodations for gentlemen, I was told: but of course I did not see them. Mohammedans are almost as fearful as women to the monks of Santa Saba; and they cannot enter the convent without liability to a large fine. We knew this beforehand, and we therefore carried tents enough for the ineligible members of the party, while the gentlemen hoped to get lodgings within the walls.

It is an extraordinary place,—its buildings so plunging down the precipice as to make it difficult

to say how much of the mass is edifice, and how much natural rock. We dismounted on a platform before the great gate;—a gate substantial and secure enough to serve for the Bank of England. The platform was small, and dreadfully hot. Flies swarmed in the tents, where there seemed to be not a breath of air. Our fatigue to-day had been excessive; our travelling comforts ran short; and it did not add to our ease to be told that some Bedoueens were hanging about, and had stolen two of the horses of our escort. News soon came that the horses were recovered, and that two muskets belonging to the thieves had been taken and brought into our little encampment, where it seemed most likely that the owners would come for them in the night. One of the gentlemen advised me to take great care of my watch; which I would thankfully have done, if I had known how. Our Mohammedan servants, however, were delighted at the opportunity of protecting the Christian ladies; and our dragoman lay down at one end of our tent, and the cook at the other, begging us to feel quite secure. One gallant youth of the company would not enter the convent while his mother and sister remained outside: and, there being no room for him in their tent, he spent the night on the hard rock,—actually on an exposed shelf of rock,—with his pistols and dagger on each side of him. All were glad, I believe, when the morning came, and we could ride away from flies and ants, and heat, and monks too holy to be hospitable, except to gentlemen who need it least.

This convent is said to be in possession of many MSS., some of which are inestimable. All I could

learn of these was that the monks permit Turks to look at them, but neither Jews nor Christians; an arrangement which appears strangely at variance with that which makes it so difficult for Mohammedans to enter the building.—After we had left the place, we were told that a sort of outhouse,—a square building on a rock, was open to women, if they chose to rest there: but we did not know this in time to compare its accommodations with those of the tent.

Our three hours' ride to Jerusalem was delightful. The road led over the hills, and was seldom far away from the bed of Kedron. There is no finer view of Jerusalem than one from a hill side on this route, whence it appears perched on a height which seems incredible, while the intervening ground is concealed by the nearer eminences. In the valley of the Kedron, approaching the ancient Tophet, the cultivation was very rich,—gardens, and groves of figs, oranges, pomegranates and olives abounding. We passed Job's well, and under the rock caves of the valley of Gihon, and below the mournful Aceldama, and entered Jerusalem by the Jaffa gate, after an excursion full of interest and profit.

CHAPTER V.

JERUSALEM.—CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.—VALLEY OF GIHON.—POOL AND FOUNTAIN OF SILOAM.—TOMBS OF THE PROPHETS.—MOUNT OF OLIVES.—GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.—TOMBS OF THE KINGS.—GOVERNOR'S HOUSE.

I HAD avoided going to the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Easter week, as I said before; but it was necessary to see it before leaving Jerusalem. I was relieved to find how easy it is to look at it as a mere sight: and but for what I witnessed within the walls, I should not have supposed that an educated person of any Christian denomination could have found his religious feelings involved in such a spectacle. To think of Christ and Christianity in the midst of this church is like having a reverie of sunrise from a mountain-top when one is looking at a puppet-show. One is called away from contemplating that light that lightens the Gentiles and is the glory of Israel, to look at such fabulous shows as it is a sin to put before the peasant and the infant. Yet here are grown men, conducting the display, apparently in earnest; and some who ought to know better giving that devout heed to what they say which is in truth the deepest irreverence. What a puppet-show is this place compared with the temples

where I had seen the sculptured Osiris, armed with the symbols of Justice and Judgment, executing his function upon the dead! How noble are the traditions of Osiris, how calm and pure the records of his life and doctrine, compared with the dreadful things which are here said of a greater than Osiris;—said on a spot within view of the Temple courts where he taught his simple doctrine, and the Mountain where he passed his holy hours! The only thing to be done in such places as this church is to put aside entirely the Christianity with which one is familiar, and look at what is before one's eyes as one would look upon the ceremonies of the Joss-house in China, or the exhibition of Medicine-Mystery at the Falls of the Mississippi. The pain of it is in all this going on in such a locality, and in the very name of the locality.

The greater part of this church is as like as need be to a heathen temple, but without its grace. In grace, though not in gorgeousness and glitter, the shrines of Astarte in the time of Jezebel must have surpassed this idol-temple, profanely called by the name of Christ. From seeing the lamps, and marbles, and shining metals, and altars, and the chapels of the Latins, Greeks and Armenians, we were led to the nucleus of the building and its interests,—the pretended sepulchre. Here, under one roof, we were shown the garden-tomb, with the stone on which the announcing angel stood; the place of the cross,—Mount Calvary being a stair-case of twenty-two steps,—and about a dozen sacred places, curiously disposed in an exact circle, a few feet distant from each other. Those who, looking at the city from the Mount of Olives, can believe this ever to

have been the site of Calvary, or of the tomb in the adjacent garden, may believe in this circular scene of sacred events. In the absence of all knowledge where Golgotha was, it would require something better than any existing evidence to prove that, as it was certainly outside the city, it could have been on the lower slope of Acra, close by the ravine between Acra and Moriah which was filled up by the Asmonean princes; a spot almost in the centre of the city, as it was both before and after the time of Christ.—As for the Calvary, the sockets of the three crosses are shown so close together that there could have been no room for them to stand, except one behind another. The rending of the rocks must of course be displayed on the same spot;—a fissure cased with marble. And, as the apostle Paul says that "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive," the head of Adam was found in this fissure beside the cross. The pillar of scourging is brought here, and shown through an aperture. The monks admit that this pillar has been shifted, with the same honesty with which their predecessors admitted to Dr. Richardson that the stone which assumes to have once closed the mouth of the sepulchre is a substitute for the real one; the Armenians having stolen the latter, to exhibit at their convent on Mount Zion.

I have before mentioned that neither Jew nor Mohammedan could enter this building with safety to life,—except on the set festival occasions when Turkish guards are wanted, and the Governor of Jerusalem has to keep the Latin and Greek Christians from tearing one another's throats. No one will wonder that the Jews do not desire to enter this idolatrous temple: but

it is remarkable that the Mohammedans do not, so devoutly as they usually pay homage to the sacred places of the prophets, from Abraham to Christ. The reason in this instance is curious. They do not believe in the sepulchre, because they do not believe in the death of Jesus. They hold that he ascended alive into heaven, leaving the likeness of his face to Judas, who was executed. They think it probable that the body of the crucified Judas may have been laid here: so they would carefully keep away, even if they had the freest liberty to enter; and they ridicule the mistake of the Christians who pay their homage at the shrine of the traitor. How like the disputes of Fetish worshippers all this is! and how wholly alien from all our conceptions of that devotion which Jesus taught and practised!

The circle of sacred places has to be made out by some bold stretching, of course: so we were shown the stocks in which the feet of Jesus were put. When we reached the place where the soldier who struck Jesus came to repent, we all laughed,—the device was so exquisitely innocent! Yet even these things are not too much for some people, educated in England, who vie with these monks themselves in superstition. A lady stood in a solemn attitude, with folded arms and bowed head, while we examined the Calvary. When we moved on, she threw back her veil, and we recognised in her an English lady, now a Russian Countess, whom we met daily at the table d' hôte at Cairo. With a most extraordinary gesture, she cast aside her veil, threw open her arms, prostrated herself at the altar, and not only covered the place of the cross with kisses, but laid her head into the socket. I could look no

longer, and hastened away to see the one truly interesting thing in the church.

The tombs of Godfrey of Bouillon and his brother Baldwin were once shown here;—sarcophagi on small marble pillars. It is said that the Greeks destroyed them; and we could find only the place where these heroes were said to have been buried. Two stone seats were called the tombs; but we understood them as merely pointing out the locality. The inscription on Godfrey's tomb is worth preserving, at the risk of some repetition. It is this:

"Hic jacet inclytus Dux Godefridus de Bulion, qui totam istam terram acquisivit cultui Christiano; cujus anima regnet cum Christo. Amen."

His sword and spurs were here,—relics, of whose genuineness there is no reason to doubt. When I handled them, I was glad I had come. The sword is not very heavy,—plain, and with a hilt which seemed to us to suit rather a small hand.

In the area in front of the church, there is always a little market of beads, crucifixes, carved shells, &c.; and here the beggars collect, alarming the stranger into giving alms, under penalty of contact with their clothes. The dragoman had to lay about him with a stout stick before we had any peace.

Our refreshment while in this heathen metropolis of Christendom was in our walks in the environs. While wandering among the great natural objects,—the valleys, pools, and hills which superstition cannot meddle with or disguise, all was right, and we could recognise for ourselves the haunts of Jesus, and enter into his thoughts.—We went out by the Bethlehem-

gate, and along the Valley of Hinnom or Gihon. Here, and down to the junction of this ravine with the Valley of Jehoshaphat, at the ancient Tophet, were once the idol-groves and shrines where, in the days of Solomon, the worship of Jehovah was joined with that of the lingering deities of the prior inhabitants. Here, in later days, did Jezebel and her royal train come forth to their festivals, and see the fires lighted in honour of Moloch, where children were passed through the flames, as a sort of charm, like that which subsists to this day among the peasantry of some Catholic countries. Here, in a yet later day, were kept up smouldering fires which consumed the dead bodies of malefactors and garbage, making the ravine that accursed place "where the worm died not, and the fire was not quenched;"—the place which was to the Hebrews the image of hell: and overhanging it, on the opposite hill, was the Potter's Field, where strangers were buried; and for so long a course of time, that many bones are still crumbling there. The groves and gardens of the idolaters are gone; the harp and tabret (Toph, from which came the name of Tophet) which drowned the cries of the children and exalted the mirth of the revellers, are now never heard there. The bodies of criminals, thrown there to stigmatise the scene of idolatry, and the filth of the city, have ages since, been swept away by torrents which have themselves disappeared, having brought down earth which now yields food to man. The worm is dead and the fire is quenched; and there remain only the empty sepulchres, yawning in the red rock, and the desolate Aceldama on the hill. The soil washed down by the winter rains is detained by

terracing, and made to yield thin crops of wheat and barley, and to support a few scattered olive trees. Further down, at the confluence of the old torrent and Kedron, the soil is deeper, and rich enough to encourage a full cultivation. There, thickets of pomegranate and orange refresh the eye, and lead one to look round for the pools from which they are watered.

The first we meet is the Well of Job, as it is now called; though it need not be explained that there is no more reason for supposing the ancient Arab Job to have been here than at any place in Europe. The Franks call it the Well of Nehemiah, which is more reasonable. This well was sounded by Pococke, and found to be 122 feet deep: yet it sometimes overflows. What a treasure this must always have been to the city, and what an object to its besiegers, is clear. Turning up to the left, towards the Valley of Jehoshaphat, we came next to the Pool of Siloam, whose waters run off to fertilise the gardens at the junction of the valleys. This pool is fed from a spring above, by a channel in the rock. Its form is that of an oblong square, and it has the beauty which belongs to all ancient buildings here,—the crumbling stone, and tufts and garlands of weeds. The pool which is usually called the Fountain of Siloam, further on, is more beautiful, from its waters lying in the deep shadow of the rock. We went down into a cave, and by a descent of broad wet steps, cut in the rock, to the dim pool, where an Arab woman was washing clothes,—her picturesque figure adding not a little to the beauty of the scene. This water was not used for drinking in former times, nor is it now. It was used, in the time

of the Temple, for ablution by the priests, before flowing down in the rock to this cave; and it has been since so traditionally employed as we saw it to-day, that both Monks and Mohammedans say it was there that the Virgin washed her son's linen. It was at the pool, and not this spring, that the blind man was supposed to have washed: and the spring must have been held pure in the days when the priest came down from the Water-gate above, with his golden ewer, to fetch water for the Temple service.

Then we crossed the bed of Kedron, and began to ascend the slope of Olivet, under the excavated tombs. After mounting the steep ascent by a zig-zag path for some way, we were led into a barley-field, through the midst of the corn, towards a group of olive trees, among whose roots was an entrance into a cave, where we should least have looked for one. Lighted candles were put into our hands, and we went in to explore. It appeared to us an extraordinary place, and we wondered that we had heard no more of it. We had heard of the Tombs of the Kings, and the Tombs of the Judges, but not of these Tombs of the Prophets. We well knew that this old valley had been watered with the blood of the prophets, as too often with the tears of true-hearted Hebrews: we felt as if we trod upon their dust wherever we turned at the foot of this Mount: but it was a surprise to be told that we were actually standing in their sepulchre. Whether this is likely to be true, we did not know: but there can be no doubt of this being a place of sepulture. Many passages diverged from the entrance: and though there were no inscriptions, nor other express guidance, the recesses

and niches showed plainly enough that these caverns, reached by a mere hole among the olive-roots, had been an abode of the dead.

Then we went up (and not for the only time) to the summit of Olivet, which is really a long and toilsome walk from the city, and not a mere ascent of a gentle slope, as we had always at home supposed. The Convent of the Ascension stands on this ridge; and a family lives on the spot, to keep and show the Mosque which covers the foot-print of Christ,—the spot from which he sprang from the earth! The other is in the Mosque of Omar. It seemed hard to encounter this idolatrous nonsense in such a place: but the Mount is high and wide; and elsewhere our feelings might remain undisturbed.—We ascended the minaret, the second time we came here, for the sake of the view: and there is no other to be compared to it. We commanded the whole city, as it lay on the opposite summit; and a truly noble city it looked. Every cupola, and almost every stone was distinct to the eye through that pellucid atmosphere, and the whole mass absolutely glittered against the clear sky. We could follow out by the flat roofs the narrow winding streets, and mark the extent of the many unoccupied spaces now laid waste, but where there was once "prosperity within her palaces." How glorious must the Temple buildings have looked from here, towering over the Valley of Kedron, and the gilded roof of the Sanctuary flashing in the sun! We could now see, as on a preceding Friday, the gay groups scattered about the green lawns of the Mosque of Omar. Of old, other groups might have been seen there, among the

colonnades of the temple courts;—the gentiles in their court; the money-changers and market people in the outer range,—the women going up with their offerings,—and the priests passing to and fro on their services. This was a sight too for the Roman soldiers who might come up hither from the encampment of their legion below. They would see the smoke of the sacrifice curling up into the clear evening sky; and the watchman relieving guard upon the walls. If the breeze blew hitherward, they might possibly hear the challenge of the sentinels: and at all events, the glorious martial music of the Hebrews,—the full swell of their wind instruments,—a music beyond compare for rousing valour or devotion,—would come on the night wind, to thrill or soothe the souls of the very foe. This was the spot for seeing how the Lion of Judah stood at bay with the hunters. From hence spread a wide view of that country, rich from side to side,—from where the Dead Sea glittered in the morning sun, and the plain of Jordan spread like a garden, on the east, to where, on the west, the pastures were clothed with flocks, and the hills teemed with corn and oil and wine,—that rich country which the Hebrews might have enjoyed in luxury, if they could have remained submissive to Rome. But that country lay almost deserted during the siege, because the inhabitants had gone up to Jerusalem to the Feast, and were shut in by the foe, and would not yield. Far away stretched the fruitful fields, and the young lambs were abroad without a shepherd; and here at hand, within these city walls, was the mother slaying her sucking child for food! Here, while baited, exhausted, pierced on every

side, did the Lion of Judah stand at bay with the hunters.

This is not, however, the spot from which, according to tradition, Jesus pronounced the doom of the city. That spot is a little way down the hill; and it is marked by the ruins of a small convent. It might have been the place; for it commanded the Temple buildings, and a fine view of the city. The lamentation commemorated here was not that invocation to Jerusalem, as the destroyer of the prophets, which is usually called the weeping of Christ over Jerusalem. That touching lament was uttered in the temple, at the close of a denunciation of the Pharisees. It was in leaving the Temple,—that Temple of Herod which was new within the memory of the generation who heard him, and of which the nation was proud,—that the disciples pointed out to him "what manner of stones and of buildings" were there, and that he intimated the ruin that must come. They passed the gates, crossed the brook, and "sat upon the Mount of Olives over against the Temple:" and then the disciples asked him privately what was the ruin which he had foretold.

To this incident we owe the clearest exposition we are in possession of, of the belief and doctrine of Jesus in regard to his kingdom. That it was a spiritual kingdom, not to be won by war, and not limited to the expulsion of the Roman power from Palestine, or the mere re-establishment of the Mosaic system in its purity under a Jewish monarch, had long been evident. But from this moment, it was made clear what his expectation was, as understood by his followers, and recorded by those who some years afterwards wrote his history for the informa-

tion of the world.* Luke, in addressing Theophilus, undertakes to review and consolidate, from the many written accounts circulated at the time of his history,† the narrative and expositions which exhibit the facts and teachings of Christ; and he delivers to us, somewhat less at large than Matthew and Mark, what it was that Jesus declared on this occasion, concerning the approaching establishment of his kingdom: and that the expectation now sanctioned was entertained by the disciples throughout the existing generation, we know from the distinct statements of Paul (1 Thessalonians, IV. 13—18). The kingdom of Christ was to come in that generation, by the destruction of the existing world, when not only the Temple should be overthrown, but the powers of the world and the frame of nature. There was to be a new heaven and a new earth: Christ was to come, attended by the risen dead and by heavenly beings; and those of his followers who remained alive were to meet him in the air, and be rendered immortal without the intervention of death.‡ A spiritual kingdom was to be established which should supersede the Law: but the Law was to be carefully maintained till then. He did not come to overthrow the Law and Prophets; but to fulfil them. His present mission was to restore the Mosaic system to its purity; to rebuke the legal pedantry of the Pharisees, and discountenance their preference of the oral Law over the written; to revive the soul and spirit of the Mosaic dispensation, in preparation for its abolition and his second coming.§

* Matt. XXIV. XXV.; Mark, XIII.; Luke, XXI. † Luke, I. 1—4.
‡ Matt. XXIV. 30, 31; Mark, XIII. 26, 27; Luke, XXI. 27; 1 Thessalonians, IV. 15—17. § Matt. V. 17—20.

After that second coming, his immediate followers were to be the Judges of his kingdom, sitting on twelve thrones, to judge the tribes of Israel.* Of the precise time when this should happen, he declared that he knew nothing. God alone knew this: but he himself could say only that that generation should not pass away till all this was fulfilled.†—When that generation had passed away, and the destruction was found to be limited to the conquest of the land and nation by the Romans, the record of what was said on this spot on Olivet was naturally referred to a still future coming of Jesus: and it is known that this expectation troubled the Church and its rulers for some centuries, though, through the junction of the Oriental and Jewish philosophers, and the spread from Alexandria of a Platonising Christianity, a more and more definite reference of this discourse to a still future state of the human soul, excluding the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, gained ground. In ages when the study of the Sacred Records was confined to a small number of readers, and when those readers were of a class whose minds were sophisticated by the converging philosophies and superstitions of many nations and times, it may not be wonderful that so plain a statement of the expectations of Christ,—or of his recorders' understanding of them,—should have been slighted or perverted: but now that the records are in the hands of all men, and that men are learning that the Scriptures are records and not oracles, it seems impossible that there should be much more dispute about as clear and plain a statement as ever was penned.

* Matt. XIX. 28.

† Matt. XXIV. 34, 36; Mark, XIII. 30; Luke, XXI. 32.

No one spot of the Holy Land can be more interesting to a pilgrim than this. There can be no doubt of the incidents recorded. It is a narrative which could not have been written but from the life. In many other parts of the narratives selected for the use of the world from the great number written in the first generation, we have to remember and consider well the position and minds of the writers, the lapse of time during which fresh ideas had been flowing in upon them, and the colour their narratives must inevitably take from the character of the people for whom they were written, in order to see as the writers saw, and to deduce from their various statements the intermediate truth by which we must abide. In general, it is no light work for the sincere and reverent mind to read the gospel history, so as to come within reach of the actual voice of Jesus, and listen to it among the perplexing echoes of his place and time;—to separate it from the Jewish construction of Matthew,—the traditional accretions and arrangements of Mark and Luke,—and the Platonising medium of John;—a care and labour which it is profane and presumptuous to omit or make light of: but in this instance, the record is clear, and bears its historical truth upon the face of it. After his most vehement denunciations of the Pharisees and their teachings, as the vitiators of the Law and the oppressors of the people, Jesus was leaving the Temple. His companions pointed out to him the grandeur and solidity of this new edifice, of which every religious Jew was proud. He, believing the end of the existing world to be near, observed aloud how little this grandeur and solidity would avail.

His disciples, perplexed, and unable to explain his meaning, came and inquired of him, as he pursued his way up the Mount of Olives. He sat down here, over against the Temple, at the point whence its buildings looked most magnificent, and repeated his declaration that it would be overthrown. From this he went on to say much of the time and the object; that it should be within the existing generation, after much war and political convulsion, and in order to the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom:—a kingdom so spiritual as that the dead should rise and reign with him. He went on to declare the process and terms of this admission * of the dead to his kingdom, promising to own and admit the watchful, the pure, the faithful, the charitable,—those who should adhere to him in difficulty and danger, who should visit the sick, the poor and the prisoners, and who should keep up a steady watch for his coming; and to disown and reject the careless, and cowardly and heartless. It is an affecting moment for the pilgrim who stands on that spot, with the same ground under his feet, and the same hill of Moriah before his eyes, when he surveys at once the three periods of time concerned;—the imposing, calm and prosperous aspect of the scene when the disciples asked that pregnant question: the tumult when the Temple was burning, and the hopes of the world seemed to be carried away in the smoke of the conflagration; and the present time, when a partial phase of Christianity has succeeded, under the name of a new prophet, and all looks outwardly dead, while the kingdom of Christ has actually come in a

* Matt. XXV.

better manifestation than that of thrones,* and new wine,† and a heavenly Jerusalem,—in the new heavens and new earth of the regenerated human mind.

Descending the Mount, we came to a place of a different but very deep interest. We cannot be sure that the inclosure pointed out as the garden of Gethsemane is the precise spot: but I believe there is no reason why it should not be. It was the custom of Jesus to spend the night out of Jerusalem ‡ at the time of the Feasts; and this place was in his accustomed track; and it corresponds well with the particulars told of the approach of his captors. Gethsemane is now most forlorn. It is an inclosure of nearly 200 feet square, where we found nothing but eight extremely old olive trees, which are kept standing only by little terraces of heaped stones built up about their roots. How old these hoary, shattered, straggling trees may be, we could not learn. No one seems to know what age the olive may attain. Of course, there is a desire to suppose them to be the identical trees under whose shade Jesus sat; or, at least, suckers from their roots: but I suppose it will not be seriously maintained that olive trees really live through eighteen centuries. It is enough to imagine that here was once a shade, whether of pomegranate, vine, and fig, or of an olive grove, where the Teacher came to rest from the sorrows of the city or the glare of the valley. If here he also sustained the anguish of relinquishing life so soon after the beginning of his course,—in such early days of his life and his mission,—before his followers

* Matt. XIX. 28. † Matt. XXVI. 29; Mark, XIV. 25; Luke, XXII. 30.
‡ Luke, XXI. 37.

had comprehended the spiritual character of his kingdom, or the nation had taken into its heart the living faith that Jehovah their King was their Father and the Father of all men, this place is indeed the most sacred shrine of human sorrow! I am glad to have seen it; to know how the shades of evening gathered about him at the foot of the Mount; and how it was that he saw the multitude issue from the city gate, and come down the steep hill-side road, with their torches flaring, and their arms glittering in the yellow blaze. Step by step, he must have seen them approach,—out of the city, down the hill, over the brook, and up to the garden, where he came forth from under the trees to meet them, asking them why they came with tumult and arms, when it was never his way to conceal himself or to resist.

We haunted this valley more than any other spot in or near Jerusalem: and at different times visited all the objects interesting to a traveller, except the Tomb of the Virgin (so called by the monks.) We knocked at the gate more than once, but the knock was never answered; and we felt no concern at this, for the place is one of no religious interest. We went among the more conspicuous sculptured tombs in the Valley of Jehoshaphat;—those named after Absolom, Jehoshaphat, Zachariah, and St. James; and one day, we found our way above and through the village of Siloam. There is no tower there now, to fall on men's heads. It is a very poor village, whose inhabitants look wild enough: but still, there is a grandeur about it, as there is about all such places, from the substantial character of the building.—We went, of course, to the Tombs of the Kings, to the north of the city. The entablature here,

sculptured with fruit and flowers, is considered the most elegant work of art in or about Jerusalem. It has an air of incongruity, however, a modernness, which prevented our feeling much interest about it; while, as a tomb, the interior was so like an imitation on a small scale of what we had seen in Egypt, without explanatory remains, that a cursory look satisfied us. Dr. Robinson conjectures* this to be, as Pococke had before suggested, the tomb of the Empress Helena, who is known to have elaborated a fine sepulchre for herself at Jerusalem. The position of this tomb is striking;—in a deep trench, and accessible only by an arch in a rock partition between two sunk areas: but within we found mere square chambers, with fragments of pannelled doors, and sarcophagi, very narrow, modern looking, and (at least, one) covered with small sculpture,—flowers and fruit.

We asked permission to go to the top of the Governor's house, for the sake of obtaining the best view that can be had from without of the Mosque of Omar. This palace is actually on the site of Fort Antonia; and it was strange to look down from it into the Temple inclosure, and think that both Temple and palace are preserving their function in such changed hands.—We were seated on the roof with much civility, and coffee was sent us: and we took our time about this last gaze upon Moriah. The Mosque and its appurtenances are truly very fine;—gay and graceful in its elaborate structure; and the springing arches of the avenues to its platform; and the arcades round the circuit walls, where the priests' houses are; and the row of cypresses,

* Biblical Researches, I. 536.

with worshippers at prayer beneath them,—every incident conveying the sense of the cheerfulness and lightness of a ritual and predestinarian religion. As we were turning into the Governor's house, and I had my thoughts full of Pilate and his dreaming wife, and Peter at the fire below, and the scenes which passed in the Judgment Hall, the voice of the Muezzin calling to prayer fell upon my ear. He was in the gallery of the minaret close at hand, at the corner of the inclosure of the Mosque of Omar. The pathetic cry sounded over the space, and thrilled on the unaccustomed ear; but how much less moving and sweet is it than another summons once heard here,—the call to the "weary and heavy-laden"!

On the last week-day, we were much in the bazaars, making purchases in preparation for our long ride to Damascus. Four soldiers and a citizen came to help us in our bargaining, which made it very amusing. Neither they nor any one else seemed to have anything to do; and we saw them to great advantage,—playing with snakes on the shop-board, or smoking, or simply staring at us. While my companions were groaning over the hardships of the pavement, I felt that I would not exchange the beauty of the streets for any pavement whatever. The eye was gratified at every turn by the deep arches, vaults, interiors, weedy old walls, the very handsome people, the black shadows, and pencils or floods of light.

We spent that Saturday evening very pleasantly at the Consul's, meeting some members of the Mission, the extraordinary old lady who took such good care of herself on board the steamer on the Mahmoodieh

Canal, and a party of officers from the English brig Harlequin, then lying off Beyrout. From these officers we heard a world of European news, after our long wandering in African and Asian deserts; and in one of them I found a member of a family of old friends in my native city. It was strange enough, after talking over old Norwich and its ways, and the state of the dying O'Connell, and various doings in Parliament, to walk home through the streets of Jerusalem, and see the moon hanging above the Mount of Olives.

Our last day, Sunday, was very quiet. We walked only to the church: but we took a ride towards Bethlehem, to try our new horses; — the horses which carried us to Damascus first, and afterwards over the Lebanon, and down to Beyrout. My chesnut mare was the best of the lot. I liked her much to-day; but I was desired not to set my heart upon her, as there was no security for my ever seeing her again. If any one should, within twenty hours, bribe the owner, I might be put off with some sorry beast that would spoil my pleasure.—Next morning, however, there she was; and we never parted again till I had to leave the saddle for the steamer: and she carried me perfectly well the whole way.

We were glad to have one more view of Bethlehem, which we had not expected to see again. We rode as far south as the convent of St. Elias; and thence Bethlehem looked well on its hill promontory, commanding the plain towards Moab.

The next morning, April 12th, we set forth for Samaria.

CHAPTER VI.

SAMARITANS.—SIMON MAGUS.—WAYSIDE SCENERY.—JACOB'S WELL AT SYCHAR.—SAMARITAN SYNAGOGUE.—SEBASTE.—DJENEEN.

It was no light event to be setting forth for Samaria,—to be leaving the kingdom of Judah for that of Israel. What we had to bear in mind in this expedition was briefly this.

Samaria was given to the posterity of Joseph. It was inhabited by the tribe of Ephraim and half that of Manasseh. David and Solomon reigned over Israel and Judah united. After them, the kingdoms were separated, and Shechem or Sychar, now Nablous, already a very ancient city, was made the capital of the kingdom of Israel. We were going now among the haunts of Elijah and Elisha; and over the places where the worship of Baal and Ashtaroth reached its utmost splendour, under the influence of the zeal of Jezebel, who brought in the gods of her native region to vie with the God of Israel. We were approaching the meeting point of the religious and other ideas of the Egyptians who came up in alliance, and the Syrians who came hither from Damascus through the great valley of the Lebanon, sometimes in friendship, and sometimes in enmity. To this rendezvous of peoples

and ideas, the Assyrians also came, and wrought more powerfully on the mind of the Samaritans than even the Egyptians and the Syrians. The inhabitants of Samaria had before been of mixed race, worship, and character of mind; and when their ablest men were carried away to Nineveh, and colonised in Assyria, and Assyrians were left in their places, to intermarry with the native women, and establish themselves in the towns and fields of Samaria, it is no wonder that the Jews dreaded intercourse with them as a mongrel and half-idolatrous race, and refused to let them assist at the re-building of the Temple at Jerusalem. If the Samaritans wished to hold to the Law of Moses, and to worship Jehovah, and yet were excluded from assisting to re-build the Temple at Jerusalem, it is no wonder that they built a temple for themselves on Mount Gerizim: and again, if the Jews wished to preserve any appearance of unity of race and faith, it is no wonder that they refused to have any dealings with a people who had for generations intermarried with heathens, and regarded Jehovah as only the chief of several gods. And if the Jews believed it essential, as they now did, that there should be but one altar of Jehovah, it is no wonder that they regarded with horror the building of the temple on the mountain. It was natural, again, that lax-minded Jews, who had broken the Law, by marrying heathen wives and otherwise, and who yet wished to worship Jehovah in his temple, should resort to Sychar, to join the Samaritans,—thus rendering their race yet more mixed. Here were causes enough for there being "no friendly dealings" between the Jews and the Samaritans.—But

there was besides, the quarrel about their Scriptures,—each people charging the other with having falsified the texts about the mountains Ebal and Gerizim, and each claiming to hold the true copy of the Pentateuch.—The quarrel had been fierce for above five hundred years before the time of Christ. How many suns had gone down upon the wrath of these neighbours, who claimed the same origin and the same God! It was bitter in proportion to its duration, and to the close connection of the foes: so that it was only natural that the people of a Samaritan village should refuse to permit Jesus to rest there,* because his face was turned to Jerusalem; and that James and John should ask for the destruction of this village by fire from heaven. And how beautiful was the rebuke! What an exemption from Jewish prejudice and human anger was there in the reply which showed that a greater than Elias was here;—one whose mission was not one of vengeance but of redemption;—who came, "not to destroy men's lives, but to save them!" How soothing and uniting was the declaration that the old quarrel about the place of worship was to be left behind and forgotten;—that henceforth worship need be confined neither to the Mountain nor Jerusalem, but should be universal,—in spirit and in truth!—And how were rebuke and charity combined in the parable, when the good works of the alien Samaritan were exalted above the official sanctity of the Priest and of the servant of the Temple at Jerusalem!

And then, coming down lower than the time of Christ, a great interest attaches to Samaria. The Book

* Luke, IX. 52—56.

of Acts (ch. viii.) tells how freely the country people of Samaria accepted the gospel, and were received into its fellowship, on the preaching of Philip: and several of the Fathers give us very curious and interesting accounts of the False Christ whose dealings with the apostles are briefly related in that chapter of the Acts. Irenæus, Origen, and Eusebius give copious accounts of this Simon; in the reading of which, however, it is necessary to remember the bias under which they wrote.—It appears that two false Christs, conspicuous above all others, arose, as Eusebius says,* immediately after the ascension of Jesus, claiming to be gods, but in reality, actuated by devils:—these were Simon of Samaria, and Apollonius of Tyana. With the latter, we have nothing to do: but Simon is an interesting historical personage to those who follow the footsteps of Jesus and the Apostles through Samaria.

Simon was half a Jew, of the class of the Speculatists, and the person who, bringing the doctrines of the East into connexion with those of the Jewish sects, founded, not directly and purposely, but by the spread of his tenets, the schools of the Gnostics, to which may be traced many of the corruptions with which Christianity is overlaid to this day. When the apostles visited Samaria, they found Simon in great power and activity. His Samaritan hearers listened eagerly to his attacks upon the great prophets of the Jews;—even upon Moses himself. They exalted his miracles, told of his power of raising the dead, and, as Eusebius says, regarded him with great reverence, as one come from God. They had, as yet, hardly heard of the Prophet of

* Hist. Ecclesiast. Lib. II. cap. xii.

Nazareth: and it appears, from the account in the Acts, that Simon would willingly have joined the Nazarene community, but for the cause of alienation which arose. He appears to have been an earnest man,—an enthusiast in the use of his own powers of healing, and in the practice of his arts of magic: and he formed the low conception of Christianity which appears in his offer to Peter to purchase the communication of the powers which he saw exercised by the disciples. We must remember that there was reality at the bottom of the practice of Magical arts in the East; and that Simon, like other eastern sages and prophets, held his arts of healing and divination as scientific secrets. He was willing to pay for accessions to his knowledge; and his sincerity is proved, not only by this offer, but by his consternation when he found how his offer was reprobated as gross impiety. "Then answered Simon and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me."* When the Christian disciples heaped shame and accusation upon him, he resumed his former position and office, and preached his own doctrine, in opposition to theirs: and by nothing has Christianity suffered more; for the learning and high gifts of Simon Magus gave him a hold upon minds of no mean order, in which the two doctrines became to a great extent united,—grievously to the degradation, of course, of Christianity.

Simon adopted the belief prevalent among the Egyptians, the speculative Jews, and the nations east of them, that the Divine Idea of the Universe, — sometimes called Wisdom,† sometimes the Word, sometimes the

* Acts, VIII. 24. † Proverbs, VIII. 22—31.

Creative Power,—is manifested to men in human form. —Among the triads and trinities of the heathen world, this Intelligence or Wisdom was the female member,—the Isis of Egypt, the Mother Ennoïa of Simon Magus. This second person of the triad was called the Virgin of God, and the Spouse of God; and when the female titles were put away,—as when Osiris was the personage in question, the titles were "the first-born of God,"—"the only Son of God," "the universal Man," and many others.* The third function of the Triad was fulfilled by the Operative Power which was the necessary consequence of the Primitive Will and the first-conceived Idea, or Intelligence; which Will and Idea must be carried out into action. Many sages had taught this doctrine, in various countries, for centuries; but I do not know that any one before Simon Magus attempted to exhibit any Personifications,—beyond that of divine messages in their own persons. But Simon went to a length which proves what his own enthusiasm must have been, to induce toleration from his own mind, and from others. He presented to his followers the second Person of his triad in the form of a woman named Selena, whom he called the Divine Idea. He himself assumed to be God; or, let us suppose, a manifestation of the spirit of God: and he was received as he desired. Justin Martyr, in his Second Apology, mentions a pillar which in his time existed at Rome, and which bore inscribed "Simoni Deo Sancto:" and Irenæus says, "This Simon therefore was received by many as God." The Simonian doctrine was, briefly, that from

* Salvador, "Jésus Christ et sa Doctrine," I. 199, 200.

this Virgin-mother Ennoïa had sprung a secondary order of beings, by whom the world was created and all things done, under the limitation that the progeny was to remain ever attached to the parent,—the Active Agency to the Primal Thought. The progeny were disobedient, and held the mother captive, while they wrought all manner of abuses, and confounded ideas of good and evil. The Law of Moses and the prophets were declared (under the Samaritan prejudices of the philosopher) to share the confusion of the work of these fallen agents. Restoration could be hoped for only through the Teacher, who had come upon earth in a human form, to redeem mankind from their fall from their original purity, by bringing them a renovation of their nature. He presented himself to them as being "at once the image of the true Eternal Father, the true Son and Messiah of God, and the true Holy Spirit." * Simon and Selena were worshipped as Jupiter and Minerva, also. How strange it is, no one can imagine who has not felt it, to find in Simon Magus the meeting point of so many ideas in a mind which once never dreamed of any connexion among them. When in my childhood, I read of the first case of Simony in Christian society,—the case from which the sin took its name,—and pitied the sincere but low-minded convert who met with such rebuke and punishment from Peter, how little did I dream that the idea of this man would

* Salvador, "Jésus Christ et sa Doctrine," I. 200, 201. Irenæus, as cited by Salvador, says, "Hic igitur Simo a multis quasi Deus glorificatus est, et docuit semetipsum esse qui inter Judæos quidem quasi Filius adparuerit, in Samariâ autem quasi Pater descenderit, et in reliquis vero gentibus quasi Spiritus Sanctus adventârit."—*Irenæus advers. Hæres.* Lib. I. cap. 20.

expand till I should see in him the chief of False Christs, the personifier of the allegories of the East, the Osiris of a known age, a Jupiter within our era, and the latest association of interest with the soil of Samaria, whose earliest interest arises from its being the territory of the children of Joseph! The blame of corrupting Christianity by the infusion of his doctrine into the traditions of the disciples, is not due to Simon himself. He opposed the disciples, and their converts and his disciples opposed each other: but we have no reason to believe that he so far embraced Christianity, after Peter's repulsion, as to have the power of immediately adulterating it. It was through his schools that the corruption reached Christianity; when men who held both doctrines began fatally to blend them, overlaying the simple teachings of Jesus with mysteries and allegories and fables, as injurious to the honour of God and the moral operation of the gospel as the devices of the Pharisees had been in the far less important case of the system of Moses. That Simon Magus lived on the hill towards which we were now setting our faces is a misfortune to many a child in England born within this year. That the company of the apostles should have had among them such a poet and theologian as John the Evangelist, and that he should have become the apostle of Asia, and have applied its theosophy to the interpretation of scriptural records and facts, may occasion perplexity and uneasiness to Bibliolators; but it cannot fail to work well in the end. As Salvador says * of John and his writings, "the purpose that he had of absorbing into the doctrine

* "Jésus Christ et sa Doctrine," I. 152, 153.

of his master the highest theosophic ideas of the oriental Jews among whom he spent the greater part of his life, caused him to have recourse to forms, and to a language altogether whose meaning we may suppose to have been never familiar to his eleven colleagues.—Far, however, from complaining of the differences, of the contradictions even, which we meet with in this quadruple monument (the Four Gospels) we must see that these differences constitute its true value: they magnify it by preserving the simple and involuntary impress of men and circumstances, and by connecting it together with all the writings of the rising school, with monuments of an older date, and with the general state of the region and of the times."

Our last view of Jerusalem was very fine. We looked back from a ridge on the Nablous (the northern) road, and saw it lying, bright and stately, on its everlasting hills: but it looked lower than from most other points of view, from the Moab mountains forming its lofty background. We descended the slope before us, and lost sight of the Holy City for ever.

Again we were struck with the vivid colouring of the scenery. All this day, the hills were dressed in brilliant hues;—the soil, red, grey and brown; the tilled portions of the brightest green; and the shadows purple or lilac. All the hills show traces of having been once terraced; and they were still completely so in the neighbourhood of our encampment this evening,—the terraces following the strata of the stone, which all lay slanting. This gives a singular air of wildness to the most cultivated spots. Here and there were basins among the hills, full of corn, or with their red soil

dropped all over with fig and olive-trees: and the upland tracks wound among slopes all strewn with cistus, iris, cyclamen and anemones, and bristling with tall flowering hollyhocks. In the hollows were deep old wells, or stone cisterns, where the cattle were crowding to drink. A few camels were browsing, here and there, in the dells: and we met several groups of Arabs with their asses, carrying corn to the city. The stone villages on the heights were striking, as we found them everywhere in Palestine. Beer, ten miles from Jerusalem, was on a hill to the right. Travellers usually stop there, the first night after leaving the city: but we intended to proceed to Einbroot: and when we reached Einbroot, we were disposed to go further. We had not left Jerusalem till near noon; and the afternoon and evening were charming. We were once more alone too,—our party of four, with servants; and the saving of fatigue by the smallness of our number was great. We expected to meet the rest of the caravan at Nazareth, or at least at Damascus; and meantime, it was more convenient, from the character of the country, to travel in smaller parties. An accident retarded the largest party, so that we had left Nazareth before they arrived; and we saw no more of our Desert comrades, except of two of the gentlemen, who were at Damascus when we arrived.

Einbroot is beautiful on its hill, with its richly tilled slopes and valleys undulating all about it, and its olive trees casting their long evening shadows on the red soil. The road was very narrow and stony, between terraces of corn and groves of olive. Just past Einbroot, we descended into a hollow, and then rose again, and came out upon a green waste place, where the cattle

were drinking at an old-fashioned well. Then we entered a cultivated valley, where a promontory of the richest green, lustrous in the last rays of the sun, crossed our path. Winding round it, we entered the shadow, and watched the sunshine withdrawing from the heights. The valley narrowed to a ravine; and there were holes, like tombs, high up in the rocks on either hand. The wild-flowers made a garden of this glen; and I saw, for the first time, a honeysuckle in full blossom, climbing the rock to a great height.

Where this ravine narrowed to a pass, we observed the remains of a very substantial building, which looked like a fort. It was on our left hand; and just beyond it, sunk in a platform of rock, under a precipice garlanded with ferns, was one of the beautiful old pools of the country. It was now 6 P.M., and we were glad to find that we were to encamp beside the pool, on the platform under the precipice. I hastened back on foot to the honeysuckle, and brought home a charming handful of flowers.

While we were at dinner, a sound of scuffling was heard outside: and when Alee next entered, he was out of breath. We afterwards heard the whole story; and we were amused to find how zealous our Mohammedan servants could be in the cause of "Christian infidels." Some Arabs, with their loaded mules, had come with the intention of encamping beside the pool: and, on finding the ground partly occupied, though there was plenty of room left, they became abusive, and wondered aloud what business these damned Christians had in their country. Alee resented this, and threw the speaker down over the tent-ropes. There was then a

sharp scuffle; and the cook coming to help, and the Arabs falling one upon another over the tent-pegs in the dark, they had the worst of it, and went off vowing vengeance. We heard no more of them, however.

Our destination the next day (Tuesday, April 15th) was the very ancient city of Shechem or Sychar, now Nablous. The cistus literally strewed the ground to-day; and the hollyhocks, of pale and deep lilac, and of red, grew finely. There was yellow jessamine also.—From an elevation of the rocky hills, we caught a peep of the blue Mediterranean,—for the first time since leaving Alexandria.

We learned to-day what is meant when people speak of the roads in Palestine. The nearest resemblance to our English idea of a road is where a narrow lane, heaped with stones, runs between two walls. Elsewhere, there is a just practicable passage over shelves of rock, with a bit of irregular staircase at each end, to get up and down by. The pleasantest track is that which runs through olive groves, and along fields, and across a green plain: and with all their inequalities, I believe these paths are much less fatiguing than a broad, regular, dusty road would be. The wildness and apparent privacy have a charm which compensates for some difficulty.

We pursued to-day the long and fertile Hawarrah Valley, where the crops were rich for miles together, and villages were thickly planted on the eminences. Still, though we saw many settlements, we were persuaded that there must be more out of sight,—so vast did the produce appear in comparison with the population. We were always wondering what became of the

immense quantity of wheat and barley we saw growing, —to say nothing of the fruit. And this, in a country which we had imagined, from the accounts of travellers, to be a spectacle to mankind, for desertion and barrenness! Travellers have told what they saw, no doubt; but they went, for the most part, at a different season. I imagine that we saw Palestine in its very best aspect; and many travellers have happened to be there in the intervals between the three crops of the year, when the stony, uncovered soil must indeed look parched and dreary. In this month of April, it was green, fresh, and flowery; and we asked one another repeatedly whether every mile of the land was not beautiful. I found it full of charms, from end to end.

As we proceeded to-day, the ground rose in a succession of table-lands, of which there was a series of three in leaving the Hawarrah Valley. We now began to observe the walnut and the mulberry in the orchards, and a general growing richness as we approached "the parcel of ground that Jacob bought," opposite the opening of the valley of Sychar.

At the north-east corner of the Gerizim range, the road parts off,—one branch ascending the mountain, and the other winding round its base. I was riding on before; and seeing the baggage-mules beginning to ascend, and having a sign from the dragoman to proceed, I took the upper road: but my companions pursued the lower, which led them more directly to the great object of this day's travel,—Jacob's Well. I was fortunate in taking the upper road, for it afforded me a fine view of the whole scene at once: and it was not difficult to get down to my party afterwards. When I

had passed the shoulder of the mountain, the valley of Sychar lay below me, rich with groves and gardens, and with the old sepulchres of Mount Ebal yawning in the face of the opposite precipices. At the upper end, to my left, lay the bright town, nestling in the valley, and extending completely across it,—even stretching a little way up the slopes of Gerizim. To my right, the valley opened out into the green plain,—Jacob's "parcel of ground," where a small village lay at the foot of Ebal, and a white Sheikh's tomb rose amidst the green. Another little plain joined on upon Jacob's possession; and it was bounded by a perfect semicircle of hills. Below me, to the right, lay some small clusters of ruins, where I saw my companions dismount, and where I soon joined them.

The clusters of ruins below consisted of a mill, with a channel for water, two deep shafts in the roof, and a chamber below:—and, near at hand, of the remains of a church, which was built very early in the Christian era, to honour the spot. Four granite pillars are visible. The well itself might easily be passed by unnoticed. Its mouth looks like a mere heap of stones: but several travellers who have descended into it,—Maundrell for one,—describe it so as to leave no doubt that all parties,—Jews, Samaritans, Christians, and Mohammedans,—who agree that this is the true old Jacob's well, are right. Maundrell found 15 feet of water at a depth of 105 feet (inclusive). Moreover, there is no other well in the neighbourhood, except one high up on Mount Gerizim. There are many fountains in the valley of Sychar, which one traveller or another has carelessly taken for wells: so that the descriptions

of Jacob's Well are very various. Certainly, the clear fountains and spreading reservoirs in the valley are more tempting to the imagination, and soothing to the eye of the tired traveller than this hole, where no water is to be seen: but there can be no question of this being the spot on which the narrative* represents Jesus as sitting to rest, and asking water of the Samaritan woman. As for the common objection, that this well is nearly a mile and a half from the city, and that the woman would not have come so far for water when she must have been able to obtain it at many nearer places, I see nothing in it, as the narrative does not mention that the woman came out of the city. She is not called a woman of Sychar, but a woman of Samaria;—a country-woman, probably, living near the well. When she wished to call witnesses, to come and hear the words of the way-farer, she naturally went into the city: but there is no mention of her being an inhabitant of it.

Jesus had not intended to enter the town, it is clear. He was waiting here while his disciples went up the valley, to buy food in the town; and then they would have followed the road through the plain to Samaria. There was no inducement to any Jew to enter any Samaritan city, if he could avoid it. But when the townsmen came out to him, and showed an open-minded interest in hearing of the Messiah, and of its having become lawful, in the mind of a Jew, to worship elsewhere than in the Temple, Jesus entered the city, and abode there two days.†—No scene of these ancient incidents is more clear and interesting than this. It is

* John, IV. † John, IV. 40.

impossible not to see his very gestures when he spoke of "this mountain,"—the Gerizim which rose above him, —and when he bade his hearers lift up their eyes, and look on the fields,—already "white unto the harvest;" —the tilled lands of Jacob's plain which stretched before him. The simplicity of the controversy, in the woman's statement of it, and appeal to the authority of forefathers; and the Teacher's assertion of the superiority of Jewish worship,—"ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship;"—the naturalness of this is so exquisite as to give on the spot the impression of modernness; and to make one feel more like an actual spectator of the incident than I had ever yet felt, in any of the sacred localities.—No part of the narrative is, to my mind, more striking than the offer of hospitality,—the invitation to Jesus to stay in the city. The sorest point of the controversy being this temple on Gerizim,—the Jews abhorring it, and the Samaritans feeling the hardship of their forefathers having been excluded from the Jerusalem Temple,— how the news must have run through Sychar that a teacher had come from Jerusalem itself, who said that men might worship any and everywhere! Here was an opening for peace making, and for something higher still; for exalting and spiritualising the religious conceptions of earnest and anxious inquirers. Here were "friendly dealings" indeed between Jews and Samaritans; and in the higher party, that loving care which made him ever vigilant over the perplexed and wandering, to bring them home, that there might be "one fold and one Shepherd."

Our ride up the valley, as far as the town, was

delightful. The fountains, and fields and orchards make a perfect garden of the place; and the people were standing or sitting under the shade of the trees. The sepulchres in the rock reminded us of old days; and so did the mountains, to the right hand and the left. The difference in the aspect of Ebal and Gerizim is less marked than we had been led by books to suppose; and it was some time before I felt sure that Gerizim was, on the whole, more fertile than Ebal.—Joshua could not have chosen a nobler spot for the solemn ceremony of instructing the people in the threatening and promises of the Law.* He placed six of the tribes at the foot of the one mountain, and six at the foot of the other; and caused to be proclaimed to the people those noble and awful blessings and curses which were long afterwards recorded at length in the Book of Deuteronomy.†

It was all very pleasant riding up the valley; but now we had to enter the town, and even to pass along its whole length. I have mentioned that in Egypt I found this process very disagreeable. Here, it was worse than in any place, before or after. To make part of an equestrian troop, (looking only too like Batty's troop at home;—) to pace as slowly as possible, one by one, through the ill-paved, narrow bazaars, where one's horse starts or shies at a blacksmith's fire or a fluttering curtain;—and to feel conscious all the while of a dress which is thought odious, and which was always dusty at the close of a day's travel;—all this was disagreeable enough: but at Nablous, there are other

* Joshua, VIII. 33. † Deuteronomy, XXVII, XXVIII.

désagrémens. The bigotry of the people is so great that till of late years, no Christian was permitted to set foot within the gates. Ibraheem Pasha punished the place severely, and made the people so desperately afraid of him that they observe his commands pretty much as if he had power in Syria still. One of his commands was that Christians should not be ill-treated; so we entered Nablous, and rode through it to our encampment on the other side. During our passage, I had three slaps in the face from millet stalks and other things thrown at me; and whichever way we looked, the people were grinning, thrusting out their tongues, and pretending to spit. My party blamed me for feeling this, and said things which were undeniably true about the ignorance of the people, and the contempt we should feel for such evidences of it. But, true as all this was, I did not grow reconciled to being hated and insulted; and I continue to this day to think the liability to it the great drawback of Eastern travel.

The town is large,—the bazaars handsome,—and the women becomingly dressed in cream-coloured mantles or veils, bordered with red. Just outside the further gate, there were lepers again,—a forlorn company ranged under the trees, holding out their poor maimed hands for charity.—Our tents were pitched on a grassy, weedy plot, sprinkled over with fruit trees, and with springs and gardens all about; and, of course, with the pair of mountains still rising on either hand. Ebal exhibited a large prickly-pear garden; and Gerizim a fine face of orange rocks, fissured with dark clefts, and fringed with brushwood.

After dinner, we were eager to be walking. We

wanted to obtain a view of the town from above it; and I had some little hope that before we returned we might have learned something of the few remaining Samaritans: and perhaps have seen them and their precious MS. Every one knows that this MS., though not 3,500 years old, as the Samaritans pretend, is yet a very valuable copy of the Pentateuch. It is interesting, from its value in the eyes of scholars, and from its being a fine specimen of Samaritan text:* and no less from the firm faith with which the Samaritans regard it as an antique of 3,500 years old.

We ascended the slope on our left,—that of Gerizim,—passed the Mohammedan cemetery, and attained a point whence we had a noble view, in the last sunlight, of this beautiful city. It could hardly have looked more beautiful when it was the capital of Samaria. Its houses, with their flat white roofs, are hedged in by the groves which surround the town: vines spread from roof to roof, and from court to court: four palm trees spring up in the midst; and higher aloft still, a graceful minaret here and there.

Here we were told, to my delight, that we might see the Samaritans and their synagogue. We were led down into the town, and along some low arched passages, and across a small court, to the synagogue. There the Samaritans dropped in, to greet us; and we saw almost all of the sect in the place. It was not very easy to communicate freely with them. Our dragoman did his best to interpret: but he, a Mohammedan, was not very clear about the distinctions between Jews, Samaritans and Christians: and we are not very sure

* See p. 95.

of the information obtained through him. We thought these Samaritans good-looking people, and all the better looking for the high, helmet-like, antique turban that they wore. They said their number was sixty at Nablous, and forty elsewhere;—only a hundred in the whole world. This they declared over and over again. They said—what we could hardly credit—that their chief priest was not here, but at Genoa,—with the remnant of their sect. They keep their great feasts,—three in the year,—as punctually as the Jews; going up Gerizim as the Jews used to go up to the Temple; and reading the Law from sunrise till noon.

The Synagogue is a small, ordinary-looking chapel, within a curtained recess of which is kept the old copy of the Pentateuch. It was shown to us, after some entreaty on our part. I petitioned to be allowed to touch it, "out of respect:" but the priest said that even he must wash and put on new clothes before he could touch it: and I observed indeed how carefully he held it by the ends of the rollers, within which it is furled, like the copies of the Law in Jewish synagogues. He never for a moment ceased his care not to touch the vellum.—The text is clear, small and even;—the lines continuous, and not broken into words. The ancient vellum is much tattered, of course; but it is carefully mounted on stout parchment. It was a striking scene,—this remnant of the ancient sect, collected in their little synagogue, and seen by the light of two dim candles. They gave me every opportunity of observing their countenances, and in a good light; for they were so struck with my trumpet that they crowded round me, with the candles,

wherever I moved: and, if they were too much engrossed with this novelty to attend sufficiently to our questions, they at least gave me every facility for noting their picturesque and earnest faces. There was something shocking, too, in their eagerness about an ear-trumpet, when we were full of their ancient history as Samaritans.

It was now dark: and we were lighted through the archways, and down the hill on our way home, by a single candle, which burned steadily in the still air.—I bathed in the spring which bubbled up out of the ground, among the gardens near our encampment: and after tea, we read aloud the 4th chapter of John, and the history of the Jewish and Samaritan controversy, that our memories might not be treacherous on the spot. While we were thus reading in our tent, the jackal was in full cry on the slopes of Gerizim.

We went up the hill again, the next morning, to see the city lying in its valley, and admire the picturesque Nablous people sitting and walking in their cemetery; and it was past seven before we mounted.—Nothing can be more cheerful than the valley beyond Nablous. The fountains are innumerable. Every few minutes we were passing brimming cisterns, bubbling springs, and shining brooks; and streamlets came down from the hills to the right hand and the left. Of course, the valley is fertile, and to-day, the reapers were busy among the barley all along the valley; and the waving crops on the uplands were nearly ready for the sickle. The hills, a continuation of Ebal and Gerizim, are more thickly peopled than in any district we had yet passed through,—the villages being in sight of one

another, from height to height, all the way.—We had passed a picturesque old aqueduct, which communicated with a modern mill; and we knew that the next was to be our signal to turn up the hills to the right, to find Sebaste, the ancient Samaria. The baggage-train was to proceed along the direct road to Djeneen, our resting-place for the night. Our party, when we began crossing the hills, was thus a small one, and two were ladies; and the inhabitants of Sebaste have the reputation of being rude and rapacious towards all strangers but those who are imposing from their arms and their numbers. But we met with no direct incivility. From the eminence we ascended on coming to the second aqueduct, the finest possible view is obtained of the site of the ancient Samaria: and a finer site no city, ancient or modern, ever had. The surrounding hills make a basin of about six miles in diameter. They are of considerable height, so that they might almost be called mountains; but there are openings between them which cause a sufficient circulation of air to ventilate the interior of this rampart. Nearly in the midst of this basin rises an oblong, swelling hill,—not so lofty as those which surround it, but high enough to be breezy and sunny. Old Samaria covered this hill, and stretched down round its skirts. The great Baal temple, and the palaces of his priests, and of Ahab and Jezebel, and the groves of Ashtaroth, then crowned this hill, and adorned its slopes; and the well-watered valleys on every side were rich with gardens, and orchards and fertile fields, while the opposite uplands were clothed with flocks. Over the ridge of one of these hills, came the fierce Jehu from Jezreel, where he had seen Jezebel

destroyed. He came to ascertain that all the descendants of Ahab had been put out of the way, according to his command; and when he had furthermore slain all the princes of Judah; here it was that he ordered that great feast of Baal, when these valleys echoed with music, and the sacrifices were led with rejoicing up the central hill to the great temple. There, from within that temple, were heard the shrieks of the slaughtered priests and worshippers; and thither, when none were left alive of all who had followed Baal, came Jehu himself, with his officers and attendants, to break the images of the god, and unroof the temple, and claim glory from the prophets of Jehovah for having thus vindicated his name.—Such was the place at one time: and now, how changed and still it lies! Where the dwellings of the city rose in tiers, up the hill sides, there are now terraces of waving barley, and lines of olive-trees. Where the priests trod the marble pavements of the Temple of the Sun, the night-hawk broods over her eggs among the stones. The yellow nettle grows, almost like a shrub, where garlands for the sacrifice were gathered, and the white convolvulus and dog-rose run riot over the foundation-stones of the ancient palaces.

But other powers have been here since the days of Ahab and Jehu, and the vengeful prophets of Israel. Herod rebuilt and fortified Samaria, and called it Sebaste, in honour of Augustus (Sebastus) Cæsar. Josephus tells of the citadel of Sebaste, and of the noble palaces and colonnades of Herod's building: and there are remains enough to tell the story for themselves. Shafts of granite pillars stand in the field, and

in long rows on the hill-side. Mutilated capitals are laid down among the village pavement: and broken shafts are built into the walls of the vineyards. Judging by these remains, the architecture must have been of a mean order; and I certainly felt disposed on the spot to overlook Herod and his Roman friends, and to go back in memory to the short-lived and turbulent kingdom of Israel, when the planetary faith of the East and the Monotheism of the Hebrews here carried on their most desperate conflict, and when it was high-day with the power of the prophets. It may be doubted whether any heathenism with which the world was ever afflicted was administered with so fierce a vindictiveness and cruelty as the Prophets of Jehovah cherished and boasted of in this place. Here, however,—into this valley from whence Elisha sent his fatal message to Jehu,—came One afterwards who sent a very different message abroad among men; that they should become children of a Father who makes his sun rise on the evil and the good, and sends his rain upon the just and the unjust. I could not but look upon the dewy wild flowers as having sprung up in his footsteps, where otherwise all would have been barren and dreary,—laid utterly waste by the destructive passions of men. There is a comparatively modern monument here, which looks strangely on such a spot;—a half-ruined Gothic cathedral upon the hill of Samaria! It is believed to be the work of the Empress Helena, who, crediting whatever she was told, supposed she had found the dungeon in which the Baptist was beheaded. Part of the walls of this cathedral look like any handsome modern church: and its position is very fine,

when looked back upon from the valley, or from the opposite hill-side.

We appeared a most flowery party as we rode away from Sebaste. Below the village, in a nook of moist ground, the large blue iris grew in profusion; and our guide Giuseppe, our buffoon for the time, presented us with handfuls of them. He was riding a very small ass, so largely (though not heavily) laden, that his legs stuck out horizontally over his baggage as he rode. He had stuck bunches of iris wherever he could insert them about his ass, carried a large bunch in each hand, and had feathered his hat all round with the nodding flowers; so that he was as fantastic an *avant-courier* as could be seen.—The slopes were now all yellow with marigolds, and the ground covered with scabius, white convolvulus, yellow nettles, hollyhocks and wild artichokes. We had entered the plain of Sharon, in the midst of which stands Sannoor on its flowery hill. Here we were carried on to crusading times; for here the crusaders built a stout fort, by which they commanded the neighbouring region.

A little further on, and about three hours from Djeneen, we overtook our baggage-train: and for those three hours, we had a constant succession of beautiful views. When we left the plain of Sharon, we entered a little grassy valley, where a round, weedy old well occurred here and there; and camels were feeding, and we met Arabs with their donkeys, and women carrying loads of wood. Twice we caught glimpses, through breaks in the hills, of the Plain of Esdraëlon or Jezreel, which we were to cross to-morrow: and beautiful it looked, beyond the dark foreground of olive groves,—

its rich levels stretching far away in the afternoon sunshine to the blue Galilean hills which bounded it to the north.—By a steep and picturesque descent, we came down upon Djeneen, which lies on the boundary between the hill country and the plain of Jezreel.

The town itself is on the lowest slope of the hills; and a part of it is impregnably fortified by a hedge of prickly pear. I was not aware till this day how impossible it is to do anything with such a fence. I tried, as an experiment, to pass through a gap; and when I had succeeded in getting two steps back again, out of the clutches of the malicious plant, I was persuaded that no artificial *chevaux de frise* can surpass it.—We encamped on a piece of waste ground between the town and the cemetery, and were desired not to stray, nor to leave about any article of property whatever. It is a poor town, with only about eight hundred inhabitants, who have as bad a reputation as if they lived on the Jericho road. While the tents were putting up, I happened to be sitting beside a pile of saddles and pistols; and Alee asked me not to leave the spot without calling him to mount guard, as the Djeneen people pounce upon everything that is left unwatched for a moment. I could not keep awake, after having been eight hours in the saddle, and made a pillow of the property beside me.

When I awoke, I found that some visitors had been taking pipes and coffee in the gentlemen's tent: the Governor of Djeneen, and a majestic-looking homicide; —a man of the name of Abderrahman, who arrived at home, one day of the preceding year, with a man's head hanging from his saddle. It was not too late now

for me to see these gentry; but I was not disposed. The Governor made a great show of interest about our being well guarded; and promised to send four guards who might be entirely relied on. The horses and mules were collected and pegged down early, and all made as secure as the bad character of the neighbourhood seemed to require. I walked out in the evening in the dark, when the muezzin was calling to prayer from the minaret of the town, and when all was still except when a prowling dog, or a curious townsman, stole through the grass or the tombs near, to walk round our camp. I kept within call of our people; but yet I saw a good deal of the ways of the people about, dim as the sky was, and late the hour. I never made the effort to conquer my fatigue and go out, without being glad that I had done so. I always learned something, or saw something that I was glad to remember. If nothing else, there was always the camp; and a few new faces, to add to my interior portrait gallery.

In the morning, our best mule was gone. The four guards appeared quite as much surprised as any body else, and could not account for its being released from its pegs before their eyes, and detached from the line, and carried off, without any one of the four perceiving the theft. Alee frankly told us his opinion. He believed that the Governor knew very well where the mule was; that he would come, and condole, and offer his services, and recommend that one of our muleteers should be left behind;—that, in a day or two, the beast would be declared found upon the mountain, having simply strayed; and that a sum of money would be asked for the trouble for finding;

it,—while it was, no doubt, all the while safe enough in a stable in the town. Such was Alee's view of the case, as an experienced man.

Presently the Governor came, and looked very solemn over his coffee: and his advice was that a muleteer should be left behind, — to meet us at Nazareth, after our excursion to Mount Carmel.— This business delayed our departure, so that I had time to see something of this respectable Djeneen. The respectable homicide appropriately offered his services as escort to two of us who were disposed to walk; and nothing could be more courteous than his behaviour. We were told that he had a very good case: that there was an old blood feud between his family and that of his victim, and that he had received excessive provocation. He was a fine-looking personage,—not only tall and dignified, but with an open and gentle expression of countenance.—Under his guidance, we saw the outside of the Governor's house, the café to which the smokers and news-mongers repair;—(this day, to talk over our mule, no doubt;—) a poor, half-empty bazaar, and a mosque which had four marble Corinthian pillars before it. We returned through an orange grove, which was in full blossom. Hitherto, I had seen nothing like it. Abderrahman gave us noble bunches of the blossoms, which we kept fresh for some days.

A large ruined building, like a fort, crowned an eminence near our camp: and from this I saw something which I should not have dreamed of looking for. I saw snow on a mountain peak to the north-east. This mountain was Djebel Sheikh, the last peak of the

Antilibanus range, and that which closes in the valley of the Jordan to the north.

We got to horse before ten o'clock,—not yet out of Samaria, but rejoicing that our next rest was to be among the hills of Galilee.

CHAPTER VII.

PLAIN OF ESDRAËLON.—NAZARETH.—RIDE TO MOUNT CARMEL.—CONVENT OF MOUNT CARMEL.—ACRE.—RETURN TO NAZARETH.

The Plain of Esdraëlon is as lovely in itself as it is interesting from its associations. It extends in great vastness before the eye; but there is no part, if I remember rightly, which is not visibly inclosed by hills. Immediately behind us, to the south, rose the hills of Samaria which we had just crossed. To the south-east, the plain extended back for a considerable distance behind Djeneen, there supporting the Gilboa range, where Saul and Jonathan laid down their lives together. That cluster of hills was the spot where the mighty had fallen, when David lamented in one strain the father and the son, his inveterate persecutor and his most beloved friend. In the plain, near the northern end of this Gilboa range, was Jezreel, where Ahab built for his sun-worshipping queen her famous palace, — from a window of which she asked Jehu the fatal question,— "Had Zimri peace who slew his master?"—and from which window she was thrown down, at the command of the savage conqueror.—Further along the eastern side of the plain, rises Little Mount Hermon, which we

had on our right for some hours this morning: and on one of its northern spurs lie the remains of the village of Nain. Here again, we might turn away from the bloody deeds and vindictive spirits of the earlier periods, to repose on the spiritual calm, and enjoy the benevolent acts of him who "came not to destroy men's lives but to save them." How near together are the two scenes which so strongly exhibit the differing spirit of the two dispensations! Jehu, coming at the call of Elisha, was met by the son of the widowed Jezebel as he was approaching her palace; and he shot the prince through the heart; and then, advancing, instead of attempting to console the widowed and mourning mother, he commanded her murder, by a cruel and contemptuous death. This was the pupil of the Prophet Elisha. Very near to this spot, a widowed mother appears in the history of a later time, following the bier of her only son: and one arrived who restored her son to her, after having spoken words of cheer. Here was the spirit of the new dispensation!—A little further on is Endor, where the restless and apprehensive Saul came to learn his fate and that of his house, by means of those arts of Divination which he had declared punishable by death.—A little further on still, is Mount Tabor, traditionally the Mount of Transfiguration.—Far beyond these ranges, and towering over every thing intermediate, rises that peak of Djebel Sheikh which I have mentioned, from whose base flow the first streams of the Jordan. Along the north end of the plain run the Galilean hills, in which Nazareth lies embosomed: and where they retreat to the northwest, the expansion of the plain in that direction nearly

reaches Carmel: and through it runs the Kishon, whose overflow swept away the forces of Sisera, and whose stream was defiled with the blood of four hundred and fifty of the prophets of Baal, slain at the command of Elijah.

Then, approaching us from that north-west point, comes the range of Carmel, its ilex woods becoming distinguishable on its nearer slopes. These western hills, without intermitting, decline into the lower ranges as they reach the south-west of the plain, and there become mingled with the hills of Samaria.—Nowhere in the Holy Land did we see any district so various in its historical interests as this: and indeed, there is no other so marked. To the eye of the historical and religious philosopher, the dead rise here, to give account of the life of the Hebrew nation, from their first entrance upon the land to their expulsion from it.

First comes the ghostly array of the tribes following Joshua. Some of them had had their portions assigned on the eastern side of Jordan, but had obeyed Joshua's command to defer their settlement there till the enemy should be everywhere subdued, and the tribes be secure of their respective portions.* Here they came on from the Jordan; and were halted while this fertile and beautiful plain was apportioned to the tribe of Issachar;—Issachar who, according to the blessing in Deuteronomy, was to "rejoice in his tents," † and here had abundant reason to do so.

Then, when Joshua and all that host whom he led had passed on through the Valley of the shadow of death, new generations were busy on their traces.

* Joshua, I. 12—15. † Deuteronomy, XXIII. 18.

A Kenite woman, belonging to a neutral tribe, at peace with both the Canaanites and the Hebrews, was at her tent door here one day, listening, as she watched her flock, for the far sounds of battle: for the great Canaanitish general had collected his iron chariots and ranged his troops; and Barak, the Hebrew leader, rushed down the side of Mount Tabor, to meet Sisera in the plain.* The shock of war was fierce, and the swollen river carried off many of the Canaanites whom the battle had spared. As the Kenite woman, Jael, was aware that the strife was over, while the evening stillness was settling down upon the plain, a fugitive, weary, heated and thirsty, came by. She invited him in, probably in the sincere spirit of the ordinary Eastern hospitality, which makes the tent of the host the sanctuary of the guest:—she gave him milk, and laid him down to rest. And then, while he slept heavily, occurred the tempting thought, the devilish suggestion, of the favour she might secure from the conquering party, if she delivered the commander of the foe dead into their hands: and here she murdered him. That black deed comes up to judgment in this fair scene, like a poisonous exhalation from the verdant ground.

Next comes a figure, "taller than any others of the people by the shoulders and upwards,"—a man muffled and disguised, with two followers at his heels, stealing over the plain in the night, to the dwelling of the seeress of Endor.† And through the darkness appeared the sheeted ghost,—the "old man with a mantle" whom Saul dared not look upon, even while pouring out his complaints, and questioning Samuel of

* Judges, IV. 14—22. † 1 Samuel, XXVIII. 8—25.

his doom. His restless spirit,—"sore distressed," as he declared,—was soothed by no deception or equivocal words:—"to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me," was the warning of the spirit.—And next day,—no further off than these heights of Gilboa,—Saul "was sore wounded of the archers," and, when his armour-bearer would not dispatch him before the foe came up, he fell upon his own sword. Here, among these green slopes, "Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together." And his armour was hung up in the temple of Astarte, in the nearest town upon the plain. "How were the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!" *

Long after, a stern prophet might be often seen going to and fro in various directions over this plain. "What manner of man was he?" asked king Ahaziah. "And they answered him, He was a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins.—And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite." † Yes,—Elijah often passed over this Esdraëlon;—sometimes to Damascus; sometimes to Mount Carmel, and along the course of the Kishon: and once he came upon the news that the king and queen, Ahab and Jezebel, had enlarged the grounds of their new palace at Jezreel, here at hand, by taking possession of a vineyard which they had coveted, and procured at length by false accusation and murder. We cannot tell which of the fields now spreading about the village once called Jezreel was Naboth's vineyard: but in surveying the scene, the eye cannot miss it, though it cannot identify it.

* 2 Samuel, I. 27. † 2 Kings, I. 8.

Here, soon after, came another general, driving in his chariot over the plain. He was a great man, fortunate in every thing but health: but what was all his prosperity to him while he was a leper? How earnest was his desire for relief is shown by his taking the word of "a little maid" of his wife's, a Hebrew girl, and coming all the way from Damascus to Samaria, in hope of cure. And when he had found his cure in Jordan, and had returned to Samaria to give thanks to Elisha, he was passing home to Damascus again, over this plain, when Gehazi overtook him, and obtained a gift by fraud. It might have been somewhere within sight that the Syrian general "lighted down out of his chariot" to meet the prophet's servant.

If Gehazi did here a mean and fraudulent act, his master soon committed a deed of recklessness and vindictive cruelty for which no reprobation can be too strong. He sent by this way a young prophet, in search of Jehu, with a message, as from Jehovah, the object of which was to avenge the wrongs of the prophets on the posterity of Ahab, the patron of the priests of Baal. Hither came the young prophet, with his loins girded, and the box of oil in his hand,* with which he was to anoint Jehu for his savage office. And hither soon came Jehu, breathing vengeance and slaughter, and murdered the young king who came out to meet him; and then the royal mother, at her own palace; and then above a hundred of the royal race; and finally, the whole multitude of the priests and worshippers of Baal. They are like an army of ghostly victims, haunting the plain.

* 2 Kings, IX. 1.

Here, in a later time, did the Egyptians destroy one whose life was of inestimable importance, and whose death remains a mystery. The Egyptian monarch Necho had no enmity against Josiah; and he told him so. Necho was coming up against Damascus, and had no desire to make enemies along his road: but Josiah, for some unknown reason, attacked him on his way;—possibly from fear of the Egyptian power, if it should be established to the north-east, as well as the south-west of his dominions. Here he came out against the Egyptians, upon this plain,—after witnessing the completion of the great work of elaborating and propounding the Law, and re-establishing the Passover: and here "the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded." * And they took him to Jerusalem, where he died.

And at last, after the march of more armies on errands of destruction, how sweet is the calm which settles down upon this wide field of history when the Messengers of Peace come hither, charged with words of wisdom and offices of mercy! When Jesus was on his way homewards from Jerusalem, "he must needs pass through Samaria," and, of course, over this plain. And we know that when he journeyed southwards from the lake, accompanied by those who had left their nets to follow him, he took his way by Nain. How one sees them, in the fresh morning, coming onwards over the green tracks, and delayed till the heat of noon by those who issued forth from the villages to accost and petition the Teacher! What a multitude on the slopes of Tabor! and further on, we think of the disciples

* 2 Chron. XXXV. 23.

of John coming to know who, in truth, he was, and whether they were yet to look for another.—One man afterwards travelled this road to Damascus, full of hatred and murderous thoughts against these children of the kingdom of peace; but he was soon disabused; and Paul returned an altered man,—ready to pour out his own blood, but no more to shed that of others. When the traveller contemplates this succession of events on their march through this scene, from the restless spirits of the dark early times to the blessed ministers of a later age, he sees "the day-spring from on high" touching those Galilean hills, and brightening the plain, and trusts that dark as are the clouds that yet overshadow that light, it shall "increase more and more unto the perfect day."

We were glad to find the scene so still and quiet now. The villages were few, and all retired from our track. That track was green, and perfectly level. The wild flowers were profuse along the way: wild artichokes made a sort of fence on either hand; and beyond them was long grass, where the tall cranes were wading; or tilled fields, over which the quail was flitting, and from which young partridges ran out under my horse's feet. Butterflies and dragon-flies glittered in the sun, and small birds fluttered about us as if they had no fear of us. We saw the outline of the village of Nain, standing up against the clear sky, on the promontory of Little Hermon, to our right hand. Mount Tabor rose conspicuous from the plain; and we then believed that we should look abroad from its summit, before many days were over; a hope which was not fulfilled. A little beyond the middle of the plain, a broad road

crossed our track: and here, while waiting for directions from behind which way to take, I saw a travelling party,—camels, with merchants and merchandise,—going north-eastwards along the broad road;—to Damascus, as I afterwards learned. This is the regular camel-road from the coast to Damascus.

We were now in Galilee; and it was not long before we began to ascend the hills which had looked so tempting from Djeneen. They were very pretty now, when we were climbing up, and winding round their stony passes. Their recesses were wooded, and goats were browsing on their sides. One pass was very steep: then we came upon a well: then we turned round the base of two or three eminences, rising from this high table-land; and then suddenly found ourselves looking down upon pretty Nazareth. Its modern name is Nâsirah.

No place in Palestine satisfied me more entirely than Nazareth. Much as one's associations require, it is all there; and one's first and constant emotion here is of thankfulness that Jesus was reared amidst such natural beauty. Fifteen hills congregate to form the basin in which Nazareth lies;—a basin of fertility, high up among the hills,—not deep enough for extreme heat,—at a breezy elevation,—and abundantly watered by springs in the rock, and streams from the surrounding heights. The town lies at one end of this oblong depression; and some of its buildings stretch a little way up a slope. Before the town, lies a little green plain, where we longed to pitch our tents: but the servants apprehended rain, and we were conducted to the Latin Convent. The guest-chambers there had

been taken possession of by the officers of the Harlequin,—the gentlemen we had met at the Consul's at Jerusalem: but they insisted on giving them up to us. Our quarters were so comfortable that we had no drawback but the shame of turning out our predecessors, who had had worse than no rest the night before, after the strong exercise of riding over the hills in the way peculiar to British sailors. I could scarcely keep my saddle, the next day, for laughing at the sight of the middies, spurring and tugging,—stooping to the very mane, and letting their flaps fly like a pair of wings. The steeper the hill-side, the faster they must go; and the wilder and more desperate they were, the more wretched looked their confounded dragoman. They gave him no rest of body or mind. When I heard lately that one of the party had boasted in his letters home that he had killed off three horses in that trip, I wondered whether they had allowed themselves an equal proportion of dragomen. Their method of riding, however, whatever we may otherwise think of it, certainly enhanced their merit in giving up their apartments to us, when they must have so much needed rest.

The Latin Convent is the largest building in Nazareth; but it is not disagreeably conspicuous,—the other abodes being, however poorly inhabited, substantially built. We went immediately to the Church of the Convent,—the Church of the Annunciation.

I cannot say what is the reason; but it certainly appears that a visit to this church is something very different from attendance on other convent worship in Palestine. One traveller after another,—the man of

the world, the Protestant divine, the glib narrator, and the scientific historian,—have testified without concert to the emotions excited by the worship of this church. No doubt, the locality is supremely interesting; but that would rather indispose me, for one, for a favourable impression from any of the artificial features of the place. The church is small and plain, compared with many others, though with handsome hangings, and certainly quite enough of show. The earnestness of the monks, and the beauty of the music have much to do with the impression, no doubt. The chaunting is very fine. It was certainly the best music we heard while abroad. The spectacle was strange when the choristers came down, and kneeled on the pavement beside me, and uncovered their heads at the elevation of the Host;—the marked Arab face, and the head shaven, except the top-knot left for the angel of the resurrection!

The floor rises towards the grand altar, to accommodate the grottoes below. These grottoes formed, the monks say, the lower part of the house of Joseph and Mary. The upper part, they declare, took flight to avoid desecration from the Mohammedans, and soared through the air to Loretto, resting for a time in Illyria by the way. We were obliged to visit the part which remains; which we did by descending the steps within the church. The nest of little caverns in the subterranean rock are devoutly shown as Mary's kitchen, sitting-room and chamber. Thus far, one may smile at the childish superstition which makes warm-hearted, ignorant persons gratify their imagination and affections by consecrating localities such as these. But

something follows which one cannot regard so cheerfully. We were led to the spot of the Annunciation, and shown the granite pillars which stand where the angel Gabriel and Mary stood when she received the promise. To persons well read in history, who are aware of the frequent recurrence of this mythic story, in connexion with the birth of conspicuous men, there is nothing surprising in meeting with it here: and those whose reading has not gone beyond their bible cannot but be struck by the identity of the history of the birth of Ishmael, Isaac, Samuel, and especially Samson, with that of Jesus, as far as the annunciation of each to the mother by an angel is concerned. But I had seen more. In ancient Egyptian temples, we had encountered the same story that awaited us here. In Egypt, it was harmless and interesting to see sculptured before our eyes, and explained by written legends, the appearance of Thoth, the heavenly messenger, to Tmanhemva, Queen of Thothmes IV., to announce to her from the Supreme,—from Amun Generator himself,—that she should bear a son.* In Egypt, it was harmless and interesting to trace the incarnations which, understood as we understand them now, give us at once the truths made known in the Mysteries, and the form of allegory in which the priests presented the concealed doctrine to the people. We do not revolt from the white star on the forehead of Apis, (the spot which marked the entrance of the divine ray,) nor from any other tokens of those incarnations which abound in the old Eastern mythologies. They convey

* Champollion, Lettres sur l' Egypte. Palace of Amenuphis Memnon at El Uksur.

truths in their way; and the way was appropriate to the people and the time. But when, in a much later age, the monotheistic Jews put aside the characteristics of their faith, received the infection of allegorising from their heathen neighbours, and attached their allegories to the simple history of their prophets, the process assumes a new character, and is likely to be used to a most disastrous purpose. Philo allegorised about Jewish personages and events, and Jewish scholars understood him. Origen allegorised so as to do us no harm at this day; as his method was avowed, and is sufficiently understood by Christian scholars. But it has been a great misfortune to the average Christian world for many ages, that the old allegories of Egypt,—the old images of miraculous birth, and the annunciation of it from heaven, should have been laid hold of, and repeated from age to age, however the character of the theology might change, till at last, repeated without explanation, it came to be taken, with other mythic stories, for historical truth, and is to this day profanely and literally held by multitudes who should have been trained to a truer reverence; and jested upon by multitudes more who cannot be wondered at for looking no further into Christianity, when they find this old Egyptian and Hindoo allegory presented as a historical fact at the very outset. Having stood before the sculpture of the Annunciation at Thebes, and standing now between the pillars of the Annunciation at Nazareth, I could not but feel how much less irreverence attached to the Egyptian doctrines, in their early age: and I think no one can doubt what indignation would be expressed against the blasphemous indecency

of Egyptian superstition, if we knew that they had presented to the people, as literal truth, such a story about the birth of the most distinguished of Egyptian men as our poor and ignorant fellowmen are told in our Christian churches, through the mistake of an ancient allegory for modern history. To the earnest and thoughtful observer it appears no wonder that Christianity has done so little to raise and purify the nations in eighteen centuries, while even now so much of mythological fable is permitted to encrust it, and while so many tenets which would be called immoralities in any other connection,—tenets which have found their way into Christianity as corruptions, through the self-will and vain imaginations of former men,—are now preserved as essential doctrines by the ignorance and timid superstition of later generations. Till the religion taught by Jesus is purged of its Egyptian, Greek, Assyrian and Pharisaic accretions and adulterations, there can be little hope that its effects will answer to its promises; and the mystery of its failure in regenerating the world will remain what it now is.

In the church is hung, near the altar, what the monks call the portrait of Christ,—copied from an original likeness! They actually believe in this portrait-painting among the Jews at the time of Jesus! However uncomfortable it makes one, one cannot help looking at this picture, when it is before one's eyes: and it is best to look; for there can be no association of one's idea of him with it after that. It is meant to represent the ordinary conception of his face; and it is not so bad as to be indecent: but the face is wooden, and the eyes are not quite straight. The belief of these

ignorant monks is evidently sincere; as it would be if a printing-press or a mail-coach were given to them, as being relics of the same date.

They took us to Joseph's workshop, where, as they say, Jesus assisted his father. It is now a small chapel, with a paltry altar. Next, we were shown the house where, as the monks said, "Jesus gave a supper to his friends, before and after his resurrection." A rock starts up out of the floor of this apartment, slanting, but so nearly round as to resemble a table; and hence, no doubt, the origin of the tradition. This "Mensa Christi" appears to be valued above every other memorial at Nazareth. The papal sanction* gave it this value in the eyes of the Latin Christians: the Greeks esteem it no less: and the Arabs and Turks come and prostrate themselves,—apparently because other people do,—with as much zeal as if they also were to gain seven years' indulgence by their pilgrimage.

The next building we came to interested me more than any place exhibited by the monks, in all Palestine. It was the only place in the form of a building or habitation which it appeared reasonable or possible to believe in.—It professes to be the synagogue where Christ first taught in his native place,—of which the beautiful narrative is given in Luke IV. No scene in

* The following papal certificate, in printed form, is hung up on the wall of this apartment:—"Tradictio continua est, et nunquam interrupta, apud omnes nationes Orientales, hanc petram, dictam Mensa Christi, illam ipsam esse supra quam Dominus noster Jesus Christus eum suis comedit discipulis, ante et post suam resurrectionem à mortuis. Et Sancta Romana Ecclesia Indulgentiam concessit septem annorum et totidem quadragenarum, omnibus Christi fidelibus hunc sanctum locum visitandibus, recitando saltem ibi unum Pater et Ave, dummodo sit in statu gratiæ."

his ministry had ever fixed itself more distinctly in my youthful imagination than this;—his reading from the scroll,—his delivering it to the attendant of the synagogue, and sitting down to expound what he had read, and open the promises of his mission;—the curiosity first, and then the astonishment, and then the haughty wrath of his hearers, who were eager to learn what the carpenter's son had to say, but could no more endure the statement of his claims than the people of Jerusalem,—so famous for stoning the prophets. Now, it appears that a place of public worship is less likely to be forgotten as the scene of a remarkable event, than any private dwelling: and the riot which ensued on this occasion was likely to fix the circumstances in the memory of the resident Jews, for the three centuries which elapsed before the place was appropriated by tradition. From that time, it has always been believed in, and held successively by the Latins, devout Arabs, the Greeks, and now the Latins again. Of course, no one supposes the very stones of which it is built to be eighteen centuries old: but only that this is the spot on which there has always since been a building. It is now a small and very plain chapel;—a mere old vaulted room, dim and antique-looking. I own that my heart did, for once, beat with the true pilgrim emotion while under the guidance of a monk.—This was to me, the true spot of the Annunciation,—of the annunciation of "the acceptable year of the Lord." Here he sat where probably others of the Therapeutæ had sat, calling to him the broken-hearted and the captives, and the weary and heavy-laden: and when his critical townsmen were saying in their hearts "Physician, heal thyself," he

announced to them such mighty things that were to be done above those which other teachers had offered, that they rose in wrath, and would fain have ended his life and doctrine together. As I have observed before, the aim of the Essene sect,—the physicians of bodies and souls,—was to bring out and restore the Moral Import of the Law;—to revive the life of the Mosaic system. That this was also the aim of Jesus no one can read the gospels without perceiving: but this was a preparatory work;—an all-important one in its season, and which required all the joint efforts of the missionaries whom he sent through the land: but it was still only preparatory, and to last while the Law and the authority of the Prophets lasted: and then was to come that new order of things which was called his kingdom. From that very day of his appearance, the blind guides of the people were to be shamed: the traditional fabrications and legal pedantries of the Pharisees were to be set aside for a worship which should be in spirit and in truth. The Mosaic system had become a sort of Dead Sea, overhung with heavy vapours, delusive to the eye, and pernicious to the life: and a wholesome breeze was now to sweep over it, and make all vital and translucent. But the Law itself was not yet to be touched: —not "one jot nor one tittle" was to pass away till the new kingdom was prepared. This kingdom was what he that day preached in the little synagogue at Nazareth. Others might have sat in the same seat who taught that which was truth and life in comparison with the teachings of the Pharisees: but here was One, —a townsman, whose countenance was familiar to all who heard him,—who proclaimed "the acceptable year

of the Lord," and announced the glad tidings of a kingdom to come.

There are several places on "the brow of the hill whereon the city was built" whence they might have intended to cast him down. The monks show an impossible place, two miles off. It was enough for us to station ourselves on the heights, and look about with clearer eyes than the monks could have helped us to.

I am not aware that we have any record of any appearance of Christ in the country west of Nazareth,—unless Dr. Robinson be right in differing from other authorities as to the position of Cana of Galilee.* As we rode, next day, however, from Nazareth to Mount Carmel, I could not but regard all we saw as having been familiar to his eyes; and I was all day in a mood of rejoicing, for his sake, that this nook of the world was so full of loveliness. I cannot agree with those who regard the life of Jesus as the mournful scene which it is commonly conceived to be. It is natural enough for us to look upon it as mournful. The tenderness of our gratitude and love makes us dwell on the sad features of his lot;—on the lowness of mind of his followers,—on the absence of sympathy in his family,—on the malice of his enemies,—on the apparent failure of his mission,—and on his humiliating and early death. But did these things make up his life? Have we no truer and higher sympathy with him than to be always looking for the thorns that strewed his path, without remembering the glorious world that spread around him, and the clear heavens

* Biblical Researches, III. 204.

over his head? Had he not all the gifts of the soul,—a higher wealth than that of the whole world? Had he not the pleasures of moral sympathy? If he was tortured, even into expressions of vehement wrath, by the evil tempers of the Pharisees, had he not intense enjoyments from the same source of sensibility? Did not the widow at the treasury, and the centurion, and the Syro-Phenician woman, and the family at Bethany, and the penitent woman, and the beloved disciple, all administer intense satisfactions to him? Is it not true that the still under-current of human affairs and human character is the purest and sweetest; and that it is the turbulent and corrupt part of human life which comes to the surface, and engages the eyes and ears of men? And did not Jesus know what was in Man and in his life? Was not all that was pure and sweet and noble known and felt to its very depths by him, in proportion as he was himself transcendantly pure and sweet and noble? Is there no joy in aspiration? Was his soul sad when he said "the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee"? Are there no special satisfactions to the sons of God,—to the apostle,—to the redeemer of men? Is there no substantial happiness in steadfast devotedness?—no blissful thrill in self-sacrifice?—no sense of filial repose in such a martyrdom as his? To me it rather appears that if we were wise enough to enter into his experience as we ought, we should see that never before were a few months of life so crowded with joys as were those of the Ministry of Jesus. Think of the crowds who came to him with their several griefs, none of whom he sent away sorrowing:—think of the multitude of the

docile, and hopeful, and faithful with whom he had communion:—think of his refuge in his solitude of spirit, and of his heavenly seasons of contemplation and prayer:—think of what the mere face of nature must have been to one who looked upon it with a sense quickened and deepened like his:—think, in short, what a heaven he carried within and about him, and say whether we are not irreverent and undutiful and hard if we refuse to rejoice with him, as far as in us lies.

I think no one can refuse some such sympathy who follows his footsteps in his own Galilee. If the singers of Israel,—psalmists and prophets,—exalted Lebanon for its majesty,—its summits, its cataracts, its black cedars and its snows, they praised Carmel for its beauty and richness. These mountains stand throughout the Hebrew poetry, as the symbols of power and grace.—Lebanon has lost some of its stern cedar groves: but no changes of time can materially alter its character. Carmel has lost far more. Its fertility is much lessened, and the rich woods which once clothed the slopes are now thinned, where they have not disappeared. But nothing can impair the beauty of the position of Carmel, with the clear blue sea washing up to its base,—the shore and the green plain of Zabulon stretching away on another side, and a billowy expanse of wooded hills retiring inland, closed in by the lustrous roof of an Eastern sky.

The wooding of these Galilean hills was a surprise to us to-day. For about two hours after leaving Nazareth, the hills were stony, and scantily clothed, as where they rise from the plain of Esdraëlon: but after that,

for about another hour, the scenery became so like that of the outskirts of an English park, as to give us the same home-feeling that we had in meeting familiar weeds on our entrance into the Holy Land. After crossing a stretch of the plain, which here runs in among the hills, and passing a round well, and clear, fern-grown spring, near the poor village which represents the once great city and university of Sepphoris, and then crossing more barley-fields, dropped over with clumps of fig and olive, and pomegranate coming into blossom, we entered upon the range of hills which we thought so English in their character. Rich grasses covered the slopes and feathered the glades, where the gleams and shadows and spring breezes were at their merry play. Clumps of ilex wooded every part,—casting shade into the levels, and overhanging the broken gravel-banks of the foreground. On we went, under spreading old trees, up hollow ways, along sunny glades, across grassy levels, till it was scarcely possible to believe where we were, and who had once been here.—Then we descended upon the plain of Zabulon, which is intersected by the Kishon, and inclosed by these hills, the Carmel range, and the sea. Here we came into full view of the Mediterranean, dashing its white foam upon the sands. The little town of Hayfa,* marked by the Consular flags on the roofs, lay at the foot of Carmel; and on its heights, we saw the Convent, to which we were bound. This is the most wooded side of Carmel, and it was clumped extensively with ilex. We rode briskly along the grassy road at its base, and crossed the Kishon where it gathered and spread among rocks,

* Sometimes called Caiffa;—anciently Hefa.

and flocks of cattle and goats were crowded in and about the pool. It must have been near this spot that the great contest took place between the priests of Baal and Elijah,* that the people might no longer "halt between two opinions," but choose which god they would follow. Here, at the base of Carmel, were, on the one hand, the four hundred and fifty priests of the Sun, with their garlands, altars, sacrifices;—their jewels, their music, and their favouring multitude: and on the other hand, was the "hairy man girded with a leathern belt," Elijah the Tishbite, with his servant, his altar of stones, and his faith in Jehovah. Here, amidst all the *appareil* of the splendid Sun God, who had the king and queen for worshippers, did Elijah mock,†—as man should never mock at any object of faith; and here did he so bring round the multitude as that they lent themselves to his work of vengeance, and dragged down the whole body of the priests of the Sun to this river side, and slew them there. How different must the scene have been in that day from any thing that we saw! The king Ahab and his Household Minister Obadiah, men of the opposite faiths, were abroad,—gone in different directions with attendants, to seek out the springs and fountains, and see if they could find grass enough to keep their beasts alive.‡ This plain was then brown and dusty with drought, where we were now riding over the turf and among wild-flowers, and passing cattle knee-deep in the cool waters. Where the fires of sacrifice were then blazing, and the plain was reeking in the heat under the coppery sky, and

* 1 Kings, XVIII.

† 1 Kings, XVIII. 27. ‡ 1 Kings, XVIII. 5, 6.

human blood was curdling in the hollows of the ground, we were pacing under the shade of woods, seeing the barley wave in the breeze, and crossing the clear rivulets that stole down from the heights.—When we were on the summit, I was yet more impressed with the contrast between the former day and this; and especially when I took my last look abroad before retiring to rest.—As every one knows, the summit of Carmel commands a magnificent expanse of sea: and below that ridge it was that Elijah sat, with his head bowed on his knees, while his servant watched for signs of rain.* That servant looked abroad long and patiently over the salt sea and desolated land: and at last he saw only "a little cloud arising out of the sea, no bigger than a man's hand:" and when he had come down, "the whole heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain."—I looked abroad over the same scene this night. The whole mountain side, dressed with blossoms, and flowering shrubs, and fragrant herbs, was receiving the dews of the night. The plain, ready for harvest, lay dim below;—the undulating line of the surf just showed where the land and the waters met; and over the very horizon line of the heaving sea,—just where that little cloud might have come up,—the slender crescent of the young moon was dropping into the waves. Such is my vision of "the excellency of Carmel."

It was not nearly sunset, however, when we arrived at the convent. The approach is through Hayfa, and by a rocky, grassy, wooded reach, to the foot of the ascent. The road up the mountain is very steep; but

* 1 Kings, XVIII. 42—45.

it is fenced all the way; and the traveller almost forgets his fatigues in the glory of the views. Acre, on the northern horn of the bay of which Carmel is the southern, is very conspicuous,—lying white on its promontory.

The convent is spacious and handsome; and a second house is building, for the reception of Mohammedan visitors. There are now twelve monks in it; men of a far superior order, we thought, to most that we had met. Brother Charles, who was our chief friend among them, was a travelled man, and spoke French like his mother tongue. The convent was laid waste by the Turks, at the time when they came up and murdered two thousand wounded French soldiers, who were brought hither to be nursed: and in order to rebuild it, it was necessary to obtain 30,000*l*. Brother Charles travelled over Europe, to raise the money; and he seems to have called forth good will wherever he went. He shows an album which is as rich in the eminent names of Europe as his money bag was with its gold: and his open heart and manners indicate that he has lived in kindness, given and taken. Such seems to be the spirit of the establishment, where all strangers are welcome,—where the hungry are fed, the sick are nursed, and no question is made of matters of faith and opinion. I wish this example of the Christian spirit had been as operative on all who have benefited by it as one might have hoped it would be: but there is at least one person in the world whose heart cannot be softened by the hospitable spirit of this place. If the Pharisees were right in their doctrine of the transmigration of souls, one of them has got into this man,—a minister of the

Free Church of Scotland, who delivers his paltry soul by pouring himself out in the Visitors' Book of the convent. The brethren made him as comfortable as they could, and supplied him with the little dainties of distillery and cookery, and from the garden and mountain side, which they prepare with their own hands, for the indulgence of their visitors. The holy man states this in the inscription he has left: says that here are all the luxuries of the body; but asks where, in this convent, are we to look for the salvation of the soul? He ends by declaring himself constrained to cry out, "Where now is the Lord God of Elijah?" The grateful visitors who have succeeded this person have not spared him. Between those who are shocked at his ingratitude and pride, and those who are amused at his self-complacency and bad taste, he is now pretty well punished in the Visitors' Book at Mount Carmel; so I will spare him the telling of his name.

The church of the convent is handsome; and it contains a picture worth noting — the portrait of St. Theresa, whom I agree with Bossuet in thinking one of the most interesting of the saints of his church. The bringing together of remote thoughts in travel is as remarkable to the individual as the bringing together of remote personages in the action of human life. How I used to dwell on the image of St. Theresa in my childhood, and long, in an ignorant sympathy with her, to be a nun! And then, as I grew wiser, I became ashamed of her desire for martyrdom, as I should have been of any folly in a sister, and kept my fondness for her to myself. But all the while, that was the Theresa of Spain,—now wandering among the Moors in search

of martyrdom, and now shutting herself up in her hermitage in her father's garden at Avila. It had never occurred to me that I should come upon her traces at Mount Carmel. But here she was, worshipped as the reformatrix of her order. It was she who made the Carmelites bare-footed;—*i.e.*, sandaled instead of shod. It was she who dismissed all the indulgences which had crept in among her order; and she obtained by her earnestness such power over the baser parts of human nature in those she had to deal with, as to reform the Carmelite order altogether, and witness before her death, the foundation of thirty convents, wherein her rule was to be practised in all its severity. Martyrdom by the Moors was not good enough for her: it would have been the mere gratification of a selfish craving for spiritual safety. She did much more for God and man by living to the age of sixty-seven, and bringing back the true spirit into the corrupted body of her order. Here she is,—the woman of genius and determination,—looking at us from out of her stiff head-gear,—as true a queen on this mountain throne as any empress who ever wore a crown.

We saw the cave where Elijah is said to have hidden himself; and were shown the "Pharmacie" of the monks,—who distill excellent cordials;—and their gardens,—on three terraces. But our walk down the mountain side was our best entertainment. We thrust our way among flowering shrubs, tall hollyhocks, ilex and herbs of many savours, down and down, by a zigzag path, to the School of the Prophets. It may be remembered that Obadiah,* the Household Minister of

* 1 Kings, XVIII. 4.

Ahab, hid a hundred of the prophets of the Lord in two caves. This is shown as one of these caves; some, however, calling it the place of Elijah's altar. It is a very fine grotto, in the finest position that fugitives could desire; — hardly within hearing of the waves washing the base of the mountain, but overlooking a wide expanse of sea and shore. The grotto is evidently artificial, at least in its finish; and Pococke supposes it to be entirely cut out of the rock. It is about 15 feet high, 40 long, and 20 wide. Some simple tombs of those who have died here are at hand; and among them is that of an infant of the British Consul at Jerusalem, whose lady was tenderly nursed here by the kind-hearted monks.

Our hosts apologised for our dinner to-day. It was Friday; and they gave us fish, soup-maigre and eggs, and promised meat to-morrow. But these good things, with liqueurs, "tonics" and coffee, gave us a very gentle idea of fasting. We had to amuse us within doors, an ancient map of Jerusalem, which may be said to be as much like that city as any other; and some European newspapers, sent up to us from the Harlequin, which was riding in the bay below, and whose officers had scampered after us during our morning ride,—rattled up to the convent,—taken breath, and gallopped down again,—jumped into the Harlequin's boat,—sent her back again with these newspapers, and had them pitched up the mountain, in no time. I doubt whether "Arab intensity" itself transcends that of British naval officers, on a scamper ashore. We hoped that their dragoman was reclining at ease somewhere, to recover his breath and spirits.

The next day, April 17th, we had a charming ride to Acre and back. Not being troubled with baggage mules, we could ride as we pleased; and delightful it was to canter along the Bay of Acre, over the firm sand. There were three wrecks ashore, telling of recent storms where all was now so bright and glorious. We had to cross the Kishon, where it flows into the sea; and it was deep enough to require some care. We escaped a wetting by sending in a man, who had already waded through, and who showed us the best fording place. We crossed another stream,—the Belus. A great quantity of sponge is thrown up on this coast.

Acre is a wretched-looking place at present. The natural features about it are beautiful;—its sea, and the rocks under water, a perfect feast to the eye: but the town itself is a sad image of ruin. The bazaars are poor; the people dull; and the mighty fortifications battered to pieces. The outer walls were in course of repair; and among the workmen, we observed some convicts in chains.—The distance of Acre from our convent we reckoned to be from fourteen to sixteen miles. When we returned, we were duly hungry; but were entreated to wait an hour for dinner, as more guests had arrived. —We languished in hunger till half past six, when we were summoned to table in the saloon. There was no dinner on the table; nor did it come for a quarter of an hour,—during which time we had sufficient amusement in contemplating our position. Here was the Russian Countess, whom we had left prostrated in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, her attendant lady, physician, and secretary. Beside these fiercely moustached gentlemen, sat two smooth shaven,

neat Americans. Here was a party, collected from the ends of the earth, and set down on the top of Mount Carmel, to be waited on by monks! Such a party made the good monks very busy. It was uncomfortable to think of the severity of their rule, when I saw the dinner they set before us:—first, soup and fish: then boiled fowls: then roast fowls: then broiled fowls: and finally, a huge bowl of rich custard.

The next morning our convent friends and we parted in hearty friendship; and we paced unwillingly down the mountain, and turned away from the sea. Our ride back to Nazareth made as sweet a Sunday morning of this as we could have anywhere enjoyed. All was fresh and quiet in the plain, and by the Kishon,—whose windings we now followed, and in the glades of what we called the park scenery of Galilee.—We obtained a finer view than before of Nazareth from the brow of the hill; and on dismounting, went again into the church, to enjoy the fine chaunting.

Our mule and its driver awaited us, as we had been led to expect. Just as Alee had foretold, the creature was declared by the Governor of Djeneen to have been found upon the mountain; and fourteen piastres were charged for the trouble of its recovery. Like thieves in general, the people of Djeneen are very impolitic. The place has such a bad reputation that they find themselves generally avoided by travellers. If they do not mend their morals, they will soon see no more strangers,—sell no more provisions in that market, and be no more wanted as guards.

CHAPTER VIII.

CANA.—MOUNT OF THE BEATITUDES.—TIBERIAS.—PLAIN OF GENNESARETH.—SZAFFAD.—UPPER VALLEY OF THE JORDAN.—PANIAS.—LEAVING PALESTINE.

We left Nazareth in a drizzling rain. It had delayed us till half-past eight o'clock; but we were anxious to be off,—the air was so hot and close in the convent. On the hills we met the breeze; and we enjoyed it without being aware how much we should miss it, and sigh for a breath of wind, during the next two days. Travellers going to Tabarea (Tiberias) should be warned what the place is like, that they may not be deluded, as we were, with pleasant visions of rest by the lake-side; but take their survey, and ride away again, before they are made ill by the oppression of the atmosphere. I would not judge by our own passing experience; but I believe most or all of the travellers who have remained any time at Tiberias since the great earthquake, have complained of its climate and its vermin.

At about an hour and a half from Nazareth, Giuseppe turned up the hills to the right, and made signs to us to follow him, though the baggage-mules and servants continued along the valley. We did not know what we were to see. We passed through a poor hamlet, which however had a copious spring, and a good growth of

figs:—and we came out upon a little Greek church;—the most sordid church, I think, I ever saw. We waited outside for the key,—still in entire ignorance of where we were. Close by the church-door grew several pomegranate-trees, two of which were covered with magnificent blossoms. An old woman came with the key, and led us up to a stone shaft, breast-high, with an irregular hollow at the top, which made it resemble a clumsy, unfinished font. This was the only remaining water-pot, we were told, which had held the wine at a marriage feast here; for this was Cana of Galilee. I need not say that this was no water-pot. Dr. Robinson questions this being the real Cana: but tradition is in favour of this site; and there is no evident reason against the ordinary belief. I was glad to have been here; and I brought away two pomegranate blossoms, as memorials of the place.

We were as sure now as we could feel at Jerusalem of our being on the tracks of the Teacher. Everywhere about the lake, he travelled and taught; and we might, anywhere here, look round us with the certainty of seeing what he saw. A mountain near our road to-day, about five hours, I think, from Nazareth, called by the natives the Horns of Hottein, is named by the Christians the Mount of the Beatitudes, from the tradition that here Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount. With those who believe that that body of holy instructions was delivered on several occasions, and therefore most probably in different places, this tradition will have no weight: nor has it, I believe, with any but the local guides. It is an oblong hill, green and fertile on its eastern side, and with two

eminences at one end of its ridge,—from which it derives its native name. If Jesus did not sit there to teach, he probably reclined there, as on all the hills near, in the course of his way-faring, to look abroad: and from hence he could see far. He could see over the Plain of Jezreel, which was, to every Jew, so full of recollections, at once religious and historical. He could overlook the Lake of Galilee, and follow with his eye the fishing-boats where were some whom he designed to make fishers of men. He could see on the shores, and in the recesses of the hills, and at the opening of the Plain of Gennesareth to the north, the cities over whose hard worldliness he mourned, conceiving of them as lost, like Tyre and Sidon over to the west, and Sodom and Gomorrah to the south. Here were all his haunts in this district, in his view at once:—Mount Tabor near at hand: and below, the shore of the lake, the boats, Capernaum and Bethsaida, and the solitudes to which he withdrew himself for contemplation and prayer,—for rest to his soul. And here he could meditate how yet more strongly, yet more clearly and incessantly, he could convey to his followers and the multitude his warnings against the husky religion of the Pharisees, and his blessings on the pure, the sincere, the devoted, the peaceable, and the humble spirit, of which it was hard for the pupils of the scribes and Pharisees to conceive. And unlike indeed was hit method of teaching to theirs. "He taught as one having authority, and not as the Scribes." The people were accustomed to book-language, to legal terms, of admonitions about ritual matters: in short, to solemn trifling from mere expositors. Now they were refreshed,

through their whole heart and soul, by cheerful, familiar, colloquial, original teaching from a prophet, who spoke without book, and so directly and simply that the children might understand. Our lifelong reverence for him, and our sabbatical associations with the records of his words, naturally unfit us at home for perceiving the intense familiarity of his teachings, and the beauty of that method of appeal. What we feel to be so deeply true and beautiful, we utter reverently,—as we ought: and the imagery is to us something foreign, and belonging to a remote poetical and spiritual region; so that the names and images cannot slip over the tongue like those of the corresponding imagery at home. We even shrink from a full realisation of the truth as from a kind of irreverence;—so that, at this moment, I find it difficult to say plainly what I mean. What I mean is plainly this. If Jesus were of Saxon race, and came now to reform and free our souls, his imagery would be our rural cottages and the alleys of our towns; the redbreast, the dog-rose and bramble; as in Galilee they were the rock and sand-built houses, the ravens and the lilies of the field. He would call our political and religious sects, our Magistrates and Bishops, by their ordinary names: and so, assuredly, he would the towns which received, and those which rejected his teachings. It may sound irreverent, but it ought not to do so, to conceive of him as saying "Alas! for you, Liverpool,—alas! for you, Bristol!" and as declaring that proud Edinburgh or London should be humbled. When one stands where I stood this day, above the lake, and among the wild flowers, and within sight of the places of the denounced cities, one feels a more

intense relief,—a more cheerful and animated love for those effectual discourses, than can ever be felt at home except by such as have sufficient strength of imagination and of piety, and sufficient knowledge, to transport themselves to the Teacher's side, in his own native region, and learn from himself alone,—putting aside all devices and superstitions of men,—what it was that he would say to every one of us. To my apprehension, on the spot, and with the records of his life in my hand, and the recollections of Egypt and of Sinai fresh in my mind, nothing could be simpler than his recorded words, and nothing less like what is superstitiously and irreverently taught, as coming from him, in most of the churches of Christendom. Here he stood as the way, the truth and the life:—the Messiah who was, as he believed, to lead his people into a new and spiritual kingdom, into which mankind might enter, when the Law had been fulfilled. Here he stood as the truth and the life, to bring men into that closer connexion with God as their Father which was to be added to their ancient relation to Jehovah as their King. He strove to detach their minds from the forms and means of religion, and fix their hearts upon its life and reality. He strove to raise them into a condition of earnestness, sincerity, and gentle affections towards God, and their neighbours, and their enemies: and to fit them thus for entrance upon his new kingdom of righteousness, whose approaching establishment was his great topic of promise. And he used for all this a method of appeal, such as every effectual teacher must use,—appeal to their daily knowledge and observation, to their social experience, their domestic affections,—in

short, their very commonest affairs and interests. He spoke of the kneading of bread, the bottling of wine, the sowing of seed, the mending of clothes, the moth and the rust, and the washing of dishes, as well as of thrones of clouds, and of the lightning which shines from one end of the heaven to the other.

The first thing I looked for, on coming within sight of the lake, was fishing boats. I had read and heard that we should see none; the poor and indolent inhabitants having never replaced the last they had, which was destroyed above thirty years ago: but yet, I could not help hoping that they might have exerted themselves by this time, to obtain the means of fishing in their waters. But they fish merely by casting nets, thrown from the beach or the rocks: and there was now no boat, nor any sign of human activity, as far as we could see. Mountains, valleys, and lake all lay dead. At this first view, I thought I had never seen a sheet of water so entirely without beauty. Even the Dead Sea had looked less hot, less dull, and much less insignificant. This, however, was the view from a considerable height; and its aspect improved when we had descended the long, winding road, and Tiberias was in the foreground, and the waters had become a deep blue, instead of a leaden grey.

But, of all desolations, that of the town is the worst. Outside, it has a substantial appearance, from the apparent strength of the walls, and the number of their towers: but the walls are split and loosened, and the towers decapitated by the earthquake which laid low the rest of the city in 1835. Within the gates, there is really scarcely anything left but heaps of ruins.

The town is like one vast dust-hole, swarming with vermin. We found afterwards that our late comrades had been more prudent than ourselves, and had refused to be housed in the town. They pitched their tents outside. We permitted ourselves to be guided to the house of a worthy German Jew, who sincerely desires, as does his wife, to make his guests comfortable, but who cannot achieve it in such a place, and such a climate.—Our sitting room looked tempting when we entered it; shady, airy, with a newly chalked floor, and neat deewán,—windows closed only by shutters,—chickens chirping just below them,—and a martin's nest built on the top of the chain, from which hangs the lamp in winter. It was no fault of our host's that we presently felt as if a fever was coming on,—breathless and uneasy. This was the fault of the climate; and for four-and-twenty hours after, we did not draw a free breath. We had met with something of this before descending to the Lake: as was proved by our not having ascended Mount Tabor. I earnestly wished it; but the gentlemen decreed that it would be imprudent, on account of the heat: and they promised that we should go to-morrow.

On the morrow, I did beg hard to be allowed to go: but the whole party were panting, as if in a vapour bath; my companions were fatigued by the wretched night they had had: and the gentlemen declared themselves actually unable to make the exertion. I felt that I could, and that the fresh air on the hills would more than compensate for the fatigue: and it was nearly settled that I should set off, attended by Alee: but we were assured that it would be unsafe for so

small a party to go: and I was obliged to give it up. This was the only serious omission that I am aware of in our whole journey: but there could hardly be one which we could regret more.

We staid within all the morning, on account of the heat: but in the afternoon, we found the house insufferable, and went out to seek relief in change of place. We found the town to be what its appearance indicated yesterday,—mere toppled stones patched up into dwellings, with ruins lying all about. On many roofs we saw little square chambers built of reeds, with green boughs for a finish;—tabernacles to sleep in, somewhat like those which used to be on every house top, at the old Feasts of Tabernacles. Some of these looked small enough to be mere pigeon-houses: but the inhabitants creep into them for the night, and sometimes by day, for refuge from the heat and vermin below.—We walked southwards beside the Lake, towards the Baths: and found the waters clear; the beach composed of large round pebbles;—the oleanders coming into blossom all along the shore;—and massive ruins strewn about, and even extending a considerable way under water. Our host pointed out some of these wrecks as the remains of a bathing-house which Moses and Miriam had here! And yet this man was a German Jew, who might be expected to know something of the entrance of his people upon the Promised Land.

From time to time, within the last few days, we had met parties of travellers who looked like invalids: and, on inquiry, we found they had been to these Baths of Tabarea, to which the sick resort from all parts of the

country. We found a considerable number of people in and about the baths to-day. The water, where it bubbles up from the earth, was so hot that I could not bear my finger in it for many seconds. It leaves a yellow and black scum on the earth and stones over which it passes; and travellers who have bathed in the otherwise cold waters of the lake, near where the mineral spring flows in, say that they found themselves in a tepid bath. Mrs. Y. and I were permitted to enter the women's bath. Through the dense steam, I saw a reservoir in the middle of the apartment, where, as I need not say, the water stands to cool for some time before it can be entered:—several women were standing in it; and those who had come out were sitting on a high shelf in a row, to steam themselves thoroughly before they put on their clothes. The crowd and the steam were so oppressive, that I wondered how they could stay: but the noise was not to be endured for a moment. Every woman of them all seemed to be gabbling at the top of her voice, and we rushed out after a mere glance, stunned and breathless. To this moment, I find it difficult to think of these creatures as human beings: and certainly I never saw anything, even in the lowest slave districts of the United States, which so impressed me with a sense of the impassable differences of race.—We sought refreshment, on our return, in a different sort of bathing. We were longing for coolness above everything; so Mrs. Y. and I went into the Lake from a fine old roofless tower, which had been shattered by the earthquake. At its base, the water was four feet deep; and through the wide rents in its wall, the

moonlight broke the deep shadows on the waters, and rippled on the surface.

Ibraheem Pasha built some pretty baths at the hot springs we had visited; and repaired them two or three times, after injuries from robbers. But the robbers were the stronger party: and they came so often, that the baths are deserted and going to ruin. The marble floor, deewáns and reservoir are now all dusty and desolate.

The refreshment from our bath passed away so immediately that we were convinced that our lassitude and distress were from the atmosphere. We gave orders for a very early departure the next morning, and had no comfort meantime.

Our host had lost his wife, and all his children but one, and was himself lamed, by the earthquake of 1835. It seems strange that he should remain in such a place, —marrying a new wife, and rearing a second family on the very spot where such a misfortune had happened, and might at any moment recur. But Tiberias is one of the four Holy Cities of the Talmud; and is sure therefore to be always frequented by Jews. We had visited two of the four cities,—Hebron and Jerusalem; and to-morrow we were to arrive at the fourth, Szaffad.

According to our host, the population of Tabarea is at least what it was before the earthquake. Eight hundred people were then destroyed, and very few were left. Now there are about a thousand in all: viz., 400 Mohammedans; 400 Jews; and 200 Christians.

Before four o'clock, the next morning, April 21st, I was looking abroad from a sort of terrace, where

I had gone, as soon as dressed, for air, when I saw a curious sight. The neighbours were not up; and I overlooked many households asleep on their roofs. They had laid their mattresses there, and slept in their ordinary clothes, with a coverlet thrown over them. As the day-light brightened upon their faces, one after another began to wake,—the children stirring first. They rolled and rubbed their eyes, threw off their coverlets, and jumped up,—dressed for the day, apparently.

From point to point of our journey this day, Tiberias looked well, seated on the shore between the hills and the lake, and inclosed by its turreted wall. Our road wound up and along the hills, and sometimes overhung the beach, as we went northwards towards the plain of Gennesareth. This beach must always have been pretty enough, with its boulders, and flowering shrubs, and white pebbles, and clear waters, to make it pleasant for the traveller to imagine it, in the days when the multitude collected there to greet and hear the Teacher, and when the disciples sat there mending their nets, as their boats floated a little way from the land. But it is difficult to conceive that this volcanic basin can ever have been a healthy abode for men. As I looked over it all this day, it struck me how dreary it must be in a storm. A murkiness hangs upon it in the brightest weather: and when, of old, a squall came down from among the inclosing hills, and overtook the vessel labouring in the midst of the lake, a more dreary scene of elemental commotion could hardly be imagined; nor a more welcome relief when "the wind ceased, and there was a great calm."

As we descended into the plain of Gennesareth, we perceived it to be abundantly watered; and our track was muddy;—a new incident to us. Migdol,—the old Magdala,—is now a wretched village. We passed massive ruins of some ancient structures;—weed-grown walls overhanging a clear running stream, and embosomed in blossoming shrubs. The plain was scantily cultivated; but so thickly-grown with weeds as to show how fertile it might still be.—Clouds passed over us from the north-west, sprinkling heavy drops as they went; and they were succeeded by hot sunshine: but these changes seemed to have no effect on the weather in the basin below, where all was a leaden gray.—We ascended by narrow tracks, rocky hills which occasionally afforded some relief of table-land, with its settlements and orchards; but which became steeper and longer as we approached Szaffad, (the ancient Saphet) which we reached in about eight hours from Tiberias. In one pass, about two hours short of Szaffad, we saw portals in the precipice, which told of sepulchres within.

Szaffad is an extraordinary place; and I could not but wonder that we brought so few associations to the spot as we did. It is the magnificent crest of some of the loftiest summits in Palestine; and it is seen towering above every object on this side Lebanon, from a great distance every way. Dr. Robinson saw it from Nazareth; and from it may be seen, in clear weather, Carmel, and the mountains of Samaria beyond the plain of Esdraëlon, and the extremity of the Lake of Tiberias, where the Jordan issues from it. The atmosphere was not clear enough this evening, for us to see

these things: but our eyes were amply entertained with what lay nearer.—The whole vicinity is very fertile, the ruins of former streets being made to support, as terraces, the soil from which spring corn, olives, figs and vines, in great quantities. The situation of the place is so lofty, and its air so pure in comparison with that of the plains in every direction, that it was greatly resorted to for health, in the days of its prosperity: and even from Damascus the royal children were, in ancient times, sent hither for change of air, and enjoyment of the abundant fruits. It is plentifully and incessantly watered: so that one would think,—with good soil, air and water,—nothing could impair the natural prosperity of the place. Yet it is a most mournful ruin. The earthquake is the foe that has laid it low. It played its dreadful pranks as vivaciously here as on the lower grounds. The town, divided into quarters, lay on the summits of four hills, with its massive castle towering above as the centre of the noble diadem. Now, these quarters are four enormous heaps of rubbish. The houses having been built in tiers, fell, one row upon another, so as to make the ruin complete: and now, the vines are trained over the fallen roofs; and from the heaped stones, sordid abodes are scooped out, to lodge those who will not leave the fated place.

Not only are there many who will not leave the place, but numbers are perpetually arriving, to live and die at this, the most sacred of the four Holy Cities. One of the quarters was appropriated to the Jews; and at one time there were not fewer than 12,000 at Szaffad. While the place declined, from being often

retaken by Christians and Mohammedans, other classes of inhabitants left it, or reduced their numbers; but the Jews remained. They had an university and a printing establishment, from which they sent forth learned men and the records of their lore. One reason of the sacredness of the place is the tradition that Queen Esther was born there: another, that many eminent rabbins are buried there: a third, that it is one of the four Holy Cities: but the strongest reason of all is the prevalent belief that the Messiah will first come to Szaffad; and will reign there for forty years before he goes to Jerusalem. Those whom he finds watching, he will highly exalt, as the watchers believe; and their hope is to obtain offices of honour in his kingdom. Even the dead will be the better for having died there: and thus, many a poor Polish or Italian Jew toils and saves, and saves and toils, to get to Szaffad, to end his days. On his arrival, he is presently stripped of his savings, by the local exactions which have been ordained to meet such cases as his; and then he lives on as he can: but, be his wretchedness what it may, he never leaves Szaffad. The employments here are chiefly indigo-dyeing, spinning and weaving cotton, growing fruit, and preparing wine. I observed a few palms still, though I thought we had seen the last of them: and abundance of pomegranates, lemons and walnuts.

Our encampment was beside a cemetery, in a little valley between two of the four eminences mentioned above. The castle towered above it; and the hill sides were marked by winding ways up to the summits. Near us was a copious spring, flowing into a cistern, where

noisy women were thronging all day. When I went in the evening to see the spring, the women were boisterous and rude, pulling at my dress, trying whether my hat would come off, and so on: even though our dragoman was within sight: but when we entered two or three houses, to taste wine and make inquiries, the people were very civil.—While daylight lasted, there was a row of gazers crouched on the grass before the tent, peeping in so pertinaciously,—in spite of warning, and a few blows from the servants, that we were obliged to let down the curtains. We spent the daylight hours in walking about the remains of the town, and looking abroad from the loftiest points. I was on nearly the highest ground when the sun went down behind the western mountain, dim, and as pale as the moon. All transparency seemed to be departing from the atmosphere; and where the Sea of Tiberias should have been, there was at last only a blot of dark grey vapour. The wind was rising and falling, and the aspect of this once great city and stronghold was most cheerless.

The night and morning being rainy, we rose late,—at half past six; and merely looked about us, without attempting to start till the weather cleared: but by nine o'clock, the clouds were gone, except a few fleeces hanging about the mountains; and, as we descended Djebel Szaffad, we saw to the utmost advantage the wonderful ruin crowning the steeps above us, and the beautiful Upper Valley of the Jordan, now opening before us. Its scenery is of a mild and soft character; and we saw it well under the gleamy lights of a changing day. We could fancy we saw almost to

Damascus, over the intervening mountain ranges. But we soon descended so far as rapidly to narrow the view; and presently we found ourselves in a gorge, leading to a rich little plain, or recess among the hills, where the fields were waving with corn, and much cattle was collected about a spring in the rock, with, apparently, scarcely any one near to take care of either. We found that this cultivation was the work of the industrious Szaffad people, who, with a much better soil and fuller return, seem to practise a tillage as laborious as that of the people of the Alps.

Passing over low hills to the left, we descended upon the plain of the Upper Jordan, where the tracks were so well marked that I felt myself independent of our guides, and could ride on as I pleased. There was a little dull lake lying in the plain, to the north, with flat, swampy shores and grey waters, which would not have interested us but for its ancient reputation. This was Lake Houle,—"the Waters of Merom," of Scripture,—where Joshua conquered the kings of Canaan who had united their forces there. A space of five miles intervenes between this lake and the hills at whose base we were riding. No two travellers agree about its size; the reason of which is that it is always changing,—being a mere marsh in the hot season, and a brimming lake after the rains of winter. We saw it in its half and half state; and without the enlivenment of the water fowl which scream and plash away among its sedges, in their own season.

The character of the scenery had now entirely changed, and become something quite new to us. The fatness of the valley reminded us, through this and the

succeeding day, of all the scripture imagery relating to fertility which we had not seen exemplified in the higher and drier western regions. Even here, we were on high ground compared with that part of the Jordan valley which we had struck at Jericho: for the waters of Lake Houle rattle down a long descent for eight of the ten miles which lie between it and the sea of Tiberias; and then again flow down a descent all the way to the Dead Sea: but even here, at the upper end of the Jordan valley, there was moisture and marsh and aquatic produce on every hand. On the richest of the pastures were feeding the flocks of the Bedoueens, while the black tents of the herdsmen speckled the uplands. The acacia and the plane began to draw together in clumps, and spread a broader shade. The cranes waded in taller grass, and winged their flight in larger flocks. Fat buffalo wallowed in the pools: and innumerable little tortoises perked up their impudent heads from every streamlet and swamp. Men and boys stood almost hidden in the canebrakes, cutting reeds: ants swarmed in the tracks, and shining lizards darted about among the stones at the skirts of the hills. Here and there were long reaches of tilled land, where the people were busy among their barley crops: and the smokes of two or three hamlets arose from promontories that jutted out into the streams which were making their way to the Jordan.

While we were in the full enjoyment of all this, we were delighted to learn that we were to stop at one of the most tempting spots we had seen. We had travelled little more than four hours: but we had arrived at the frontier line which divides the Pashalics

of Acre and Damascus; and there was an establishment of guards which it was as well to take advantage of for our security at night. These people take toll here;—seven piastres for every loaded camel, and so on. They live in reed huts,—very picturesque, but little serviceable: and the settlement consists merely of three or four of these huts, and a mill. The stream below the mill spreads out among reeds and little thickets; and it is crossed by a long row of stepping-stones. The mill-race guided us up to a pile of rocks, behind which lay a large pond, or small lake, with tiny pebbly beaches, and promontories and little precipices,—the whole hedged in by close thickets of flowering oleanders and other blossoming shrubs. From one of these tiny white beaches, I saw, by a pencil of light in a dark cove, a black duck at anchor; so still that it looked as if it would never move again. I returned to the tent for bathing apparatus; crossed the stream by the stepping-stones, went behind the deserted mill, and into the mill-race. The water was so warm that I was tempted to explore this delicious nook by means of it. One dark recess or cavern, in which the water was not above three feet deep, looked most enticing. I found it hung with vines, and tufted with delicate ferns, which waved in the continual breeze made by the passage of the water. A gush of light through a very low arch in the rock tempted me on. I stooped through it, and found myself in the shady cove I had seen from the little beach, with the black duck beside me, still at anchor.

Many hours of the day were yet before us, for rambling, reading, sewing and bringing up our journals.

I do not know that we had anywhere a more welcome rest than here on this frontier line of Damascus. And it was not quite our last day in the Holy Land.

We saw from our camp a mysterious-looking arch, high up on the western hill side. I went before breakfast, the next morning (April 23rd), to see what it was. I obtained a glorious view by going; but I was no wiser about the arch. I found three arches,—two of them being parallel, built close together, and corresponding precisely to the mouth of the cave before which they stood. An aqueduct being out of the question in such a place, I cannot imagine what these erections could be. The cave, and two others near, were evidently in use; for there were rags and mats strewn about, and recent marks of fire. The view was so exquisite, from the verge of the plain to the south to the snowy peak of Hermon on the north, that I would fain have stayed on the heights, to see the first flood of sunshine cast over the scene: but far below, Giuseppe was setting our breakfast table in the open air; and I must go.

To-day we crossed the valley of the Jordan at its northern end, which is closed in by Mount Hermon, now called Djebel Sheikh. The place where we took our mid-day rest was the ancient Dan. We now knew the country from Dan to Beersheba.—At the extremity of the Valley, the mountains gradually subside,—their lower slopes being wooded hills which we skirted during the latter part of this day's ride. We were now familiar with the course of the Jordan,—from its springs, which we were about to visit, to its present southern limit,—the Dead Sea,—and again, to the point

where it is believed to have once flowed into the Red Sea at Akaba. We had in Edom travelled in its ancient channel;—that channel which has been dry for some thousands of years: and now we were visiting its sources.

Before we reached the first of these, we crossed a fine old bridge, of three arches, roughly paved at the top, and without any parapet, though it sprang to a great height above the rushing river. Its yellow stone contrasted finely with the dark green of the thickets which covered the banks of the stream; and the profusion of the blossoms of the oleander cast a pink glow over these dark thickets. Several herdsmen had brought their cattle down to drink; and men and cattle were reposing in the shade. It was an exquisite picture.

The first of the supposed sources of the Jordan which we reached was at Tel-el-Kader. A pretty wooded hill, level at the top, rises from the plain; and from its base issue some abundant springs, which dash forward among stones so as to make a rapid. Here we staid some time to rest; and I sat on a large stone in the water, watching the bubbling out of the spring among the ferns and rock fissures, and shaded by a figtree loaded with green fruit.

From thence to Panias,—the Cæsarea Philippi of the New Testament,—our ride was through scenery resembling that which we had called park-land between Nazareth and Mount Carmel. We had the same slopes, broken banks, shady hollows and sunny glades;—and the same wild flowers by the way side.

We had long seen the great Saracenic castle of

Panias on its mountain top,—looking almost too high to be reached by man or beast. As we approached we found another castle below, standing beside the village: and ancient ruins appeared to be scattered here and there, far and wide over the gloriously beautiful scene.—Out of Poussin's pictures, I never saw any thing in the least like the scene, as we looked at it from under the shade of the olive grove wherein our tents were pitched. Yet Poussin himself, who put more objects distinctly into his landscapes than any other painter, could not have included all that was here harmoniously combined by Nature's master hand: — the deep shadow from beneath which we looked forth,—the undulating ground,—the high grass and weeds,—the ravine below,—the massive peaked ruin near, — the red rocks in front, — the western mountains,—the town on its terrace, embosomed in woods and hills,—the poplar clump,—the mulberry grove,—the gay horseman fording the stream,—and the high grounds backing all;—this combination was magnificent. In Europe, how far would travellers go to see such a landscape!

Three of us set forth immediately, to learn something of the objects of the place: but our guide could speak nothing but Arabic; and he led us by such a toilsome path, over rubbish and among a perfect jungle of weeds, that I turned back, leaving the gentlemen to *reconnoître* in preparation for to-morrow's sight-seeing, while I went down into the ravine to bathe. The stream gushed between two faces of rock, where the wild vines made a natural trellice over head; and under that green canopy I was tempted

on and on by the sound of a waterfall, which, pouring down from the foundations of an old ruin, made a charming shower bath. What a luxury was our daily revel in cold water, after our recent weeks of Desert travelling!

Meantime, the gentlemen found the shrine of old Pan,—from whom the place derived its most ancient and most modern name; the Roman name by which it was known at the time of the New Testament history being intermediate between the two. We went to it, the next morning; and an extraordinary place we found it. In a precipitous face of rock is a large, dim grotto, —perfectly dry when we were there, and showing no trace of the passage of waters. A fig tree issued from a crevice in the cave, and, reaching the roof, and thence drooping its large leaves, filled the place with a soft green light. In the depth of the recess was a niche,—empty now; for the great Pan is dead! Above the cave, in the face of the rock, is a large niche; and others are beside it, each at a lower height, till two just show themselves above the stony ground. These niches are arched off with graceful shell ornaments; and in one of them is the base of a statue, showing how it had been occupied. These were the shrines of the Nymphs; now empty;—for the Nymphs fled when the great Pan died. When I used to read, over and over, that fine old story of how, when the heavenly host told the shepherds at Bethlehem of the birth of Christ, a deep groan, heard through all the isles of Greece, told that the great Pan was dead, and that all the royalty of Olympus was dethroned, and the several deities were sent wandering in cold and darkness, how little did I dream that I

should ever visit any spot where the noble fable would appear like historical truth! Yet here was the place! As Osiris had passed away before; and the widowed Isis, who was to have mourned him eternally, had also melted away; and Pan, whether another or the same, succeeded him in the homage of men;—so Pan, in his turn, retired and humbled himself when this beloved fountain of his was taken from him, and called Jordan, and then pined and died when one was born by whom his empire was overthrown. It was when he thus retired, in the decline of his glory, that this spot assumed its Hebrew sanctity;—a sanctity miserably understood and expressed, as we see by the setting up of golden calves to Jehovah, as the Amun of the Hebrews, on this northern limit of the promised land, and at the source of its great river: and before it was hallowed afresh at the death of Pan, Herod here offered his flatteries to Roman power, by building a great palace for the Emperor, and calling the old Panium by the name of Cæsarea Philippi. This was the name of the place when He came hither whose gospel of Peace was disarming and dethroning the old idols of mankind. Hither he came, not waging war with idols or with men, but walking among these hills, asking of his followers * "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" and then charging "his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ." Here it was that he made those promises to Peter of high office in his approaching kingdom, on which the Romish church has built her power, and on the plea of which she maintains and will long maintain it. In that church the discrowned deities, dismissed

* Matt. XVI. 13, 20; Mark, VIII. 27, 30.

from their shrines here and elsewhere, have found a long refuge. If Pan is dead, they are not: for all the idolatries most congenial to undisciplined human nature are concentrated there, and brought into strange association with the faith and name of him at whose birth they came down from their thrones. And their power is great enough still, outside the pale of that church, as well as within it, to desecrate and corrupt the faith which has succeeded to their own. They have but too much part still, every one of them, from Osiris to the latest of his Syrian and Greek progeny, in the faith which goes by the name of Christ, to the dishonour of that holy name.

To this spot he came,—probably to see the flowing forth of Jordan from the rock. In gazing at that, he must have seen these niches, and the inscriptions which show in whose honour they were made. What a singular and most interesting union of ideas this is! It rouses our minds to read of Paul at Athens,—and our classical and religious associations are curiously blended when we read his address uttered before the altar,—that most venerable altar,—of the Unknown God. But what is that to this! Here came Jesus, to the shrines of Pan and the Nymphs, and had their statues probably, and certainly their sculptured shells and glorifying inscriptions, before his eyes. No place could be a fitter one in which to speak privately to his followers of his Messiahship and his approaching kingdom, and in which to distinguish by extraordinary promises the follower who, being the first to acknowledge his Messiahship, was selected by him to be the main support of his anticipated empire.

The springs over which Pan and the nymphs held special watch were usually beautiful, in themselves or in their environs. And if the waters here did ever really flow out of the cave itself, nothing could well be more striking. They are generally represented as gushing from the cave; and even Burckhardt, the most reliable of reporters, says, "the largest niche is above a spacious cavern, under which the river rises." As it certainly rose at the foot of the rock, and was first seen issuing from the stones, and not from the cavern at all, when we were there, it is satisfactory to find that Seetzen says, "the copious source of the river of Panias rises *near* a remarkable grotto in the rock," &c. &c. I cannot understand how so many authorities can assign the more picturesque origin to this spring, when the cave was certainly perfectly dry when we visited it, and the stream flowed forth in a different direction, and at a distance of several yards. This cannot, I imagine, be a variable circumstance, on which travellers might differ without being wrong, as in the case of the qualities of the water of the Dead Sea, and other instances.

The later faith which has transcended all preceding religions in its power over the human race, — the Mohammedan, which has won its tens of thousands to the thousands of any other faith well known to us,—is not without its representative here. Towering above the shrines of the Greek deities, and the source of the sacred Hebrew river, and the site of the palace of the Cæsars, and the fields where Jesus walked, is the great Saracenic castle, held for ages in the name of Allah and Mohammed his Prophet. We saw it long, this

day, as we were riding over the boundary hills of Palestine.

These were our last hours in the Holy Land. From these heights, we looked back upon a land of most variegated scenery; and, I could not but feel, of faiths curiously commingled, strong as was the Jewish profession of unity of faith and of race. The main feature of its faith, however, its monotheism, finally remained unchanged for so long as to serve as a basis for its distinctive character before the world. Though allegorically impaired by the Pharisaic sect before the time of Christ, and by the Alexandrian and other Christian parties ever since, that great doctrine has remained, on the whole, practically established: and this it is which distinguishes this birthplace of a religious faith above perhaps every other on earth. Next to this ranks the distinction given it by the appearance of Christ. When men shall have learned to receive his doctrine in the simplicity with which he gave it,—to receive it from himself, from his life and his words,—they will probably become aware that it is its commixture with superstitions and institutions older than itself which is the cause of its not having been more extensive and effectual in its operation than the history of eighteen centuries shows it to have been.—Encumbered with much that was never contemplated by the Teacher himself, and that is incompatible with the whole spirit of his gospel;—encumbered with a priesthood and ritual of its own, and adulterated with more or fewer of the superstitions of all the nations who ministered to the Hebrew mind, it is no wonder that the true doctrine of Christ is overlaid and almost

destroyed. The Paternity of God, extending to all men; the infallible operation of His Will or Providence; His strict Moral Government, by which moral retribution is inevitable; the brotherhood of the whole human race, and in that the promise of peace on earth and goodwill towards men: — and the establishment of a spiritual kingdom on earth, of which he should be Prince and his followers the administrators, the dead rising to enter into it, and the living to be admitted without death:—the expiration of the Jewish Law on the establishment of this kingdom, and the spiritual nature of the new religion, which was to have the heaven and the earth for its temple, and the whole body of believers for its priests;—these were the points of faith which appear to have been offered by Jesus himself;—the simple Glad Tidings which the earnest disciple hears from him when listening to his voice alone in the retirements of Palestine, sequestered from the embarrassing echoes of other countries and later times.—It was thus that Palestine and its Faith appeared to one, at least, as I looked back this day, from the ridge of the eastern hills, for the last time upon the Valley of the Jordan.

PART IV.

SYRIA AND ITS FAITH.

"Thus in the faiths old Heathendom that shook
Were different powers of strife.
Mohammed's truth lay in a holy Book,
Christ's in a sacred Life."

Milnes. Palm Leaves.

"Call it not false: look not at the falsehood of it; look at the truth of it. For these twelve centuries it (Mohammedanism) has been the religion and life guidance of the fifth part of the whole kindred of mankind. Above all, it has been a religion heartily *believed.*" *Carlyle. Hero Worship*, p. 123.

"It is the promise of Christ to make us all one flock; but how and when this union shall be, is as obscure to me as the last day. Of those four members of religion" (Pagans, Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans) "we hold a slender proportion. There are, I confess, some new additions, yet small to those which accrue to our adversaries, and those only drawn from the revolt of Pagans, men but of negative impieties, and such as deny Christ, but because they never heard of him. But the religion of the Jew is expressly against the Christian, and the Mohammedan against both."

Sir Thomas Browne. Religio Medici.

"I am pleased with contemplations which trace Piety to so pure and noble a source; which shew that good men have not been able to differ so much from each other as they imagined; that amidst all the deviations of the understanding, the beneficent necessity of their nature keeps alive the same sacred feelings." *Sir James Mackintosh. Life*, II. p. 123.

SYRIA AND ITS FAITH.

CHAPTER I.

ENTRANCE UPON THE HIGH LANDS OF SYRIA.—NIMROD'S TOMB.—FIELD OF DAMASCUS.—DAMASCUS AND ENVIRONS.—SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF MOHAMMEDANISM.—DAMASCUS AS A RESIDENCE.

THE ridge which hid Palestine from us was soon passed; and in the same moment we found ourselves in a new country, with new thoughts, and among a new people. On the shrubby hills which we passed over, under the protection of the towering Djebel Sheikh, we found blackthorn in blossom, just as it might be in England on the same day (April 24th). We rode not far beneath the snow, when we had reached a height equivalent to three-fourths of the height of the Anti-libanus range, which we had on our left hand: and for some miles we passed among volcanic *débris*,—among heaps of lava, and hillocks of burnt stones, black and dreary. In the midst of these, in a grassy meadow, lay a brimming pond, so perfectly round that the geologist of the party pointed it out as probably the crater of an extinct volcano.—Then there were upland

plains,—large table lands, half covered with flocks, showing that we had fairly entered upon the pastoral districts of the East. The towns and villages did not crown the eminences, or nestle in the valleys, as in Palestine; but were planted on the sides of the mountain, or in its recesses, on shelves of rock. One or two of them were exactly like a set of book-shelves, with houses for volumes; and their gardens below were on a slope so steep that, if it had not bulged, it is inconceivable how the soil could be retained.—The houses were no longer of stone, hewn or irregular, but of mud,—so smoothly plastered, and so carefully squared in form, as to carry back our thoughts to Nubia,—these being exactly like those neat African huts, except that they had no pyramidal inclination.—The sound of waters was all about us. Instead of the still pools and gentle springs of Palestine, we had here a rush of waters on every hand. Artificial watercourses were above us on the left hand, and below us on the right: our path was often flooded where the mountain streams burst, or overflowed their channels; and more than one of the villages seemed almost made up of mills. Almost the only feature which was like Palestine was the caves of the limestone rocks, with their wrought entrances. After we left the black volcanic *débris*, we came upon fantastic white limestone hills, which gave a curious yellow tint to the landscape when they formed the foreground to the snows of Djebel Sheikh.

As for the people,—the herdsmen on these upland plains were much like Arab herdsmen everywhere: but among the first people we met were two Druse women. The horn looked less monstrous than I had

expected: and these women were so handsomely dressed, and looked so well, with their gold ornaments, down each side of the face under the veil, that the impression made on us by the first Druse women we had seen was very favourable. Two pretty children were with them, who returned my salutation with much grace. I used to salute (by touching the forehead and breast) all the grey-haired people I met in these mountains; and all the children, and most others; and my salutation was, without a single exception, returned. It certainly pleased, rather than displeased the people; and it gave me a good opportunity of seeing their faces. The horn appears to be the point of honour with the Druse woman, as the beard is that of the Eastern man. When the bride assumes the horn, and hangs the veil over it, she presents her husband with a dagger, and desires him to kill her if she proves unfaithful. The Druse woman rarely does prove unfaithful: but, in such a case, the husband returns her horn to her family, without explanation; and they know that the dagger has done its work, and that the wife will be heard of no more.

As for the new thoughts that we plunged into, when we had passed that ridge, they were such as, I suppose, occur naturally in this extraordinary country, where the diversity of faiths is greater than in any land which the English traveller enters. In Egypt, there was but one faith, during the ages on which our attention was fixed throughout our Nile voyage. The Greeks and others derived gods from Egypt, but never added one to the Egyptian pantheon. In the Sinaï peninsula, we were concerned with only one; for there

also, our interests were altogether in the past. In Palestine, we found the meeting point of all the faiths of the ancient world:—the reservoir into which flowed streams from all the heights of human thought; and we saw how, from this reservoir, one came to send forth among men purer waters of life than had ever hitherto been dispensed. This gave a distinctiveness to Palestine, among the homes of the Faiths, greater than Egypt or Sinai could claim, in as much as the latest of these faiths was more fit for universal adoption in the course of ages. Whether all were derived from some primitive Ideas, we know not; nor can ever know but by new light being cast on early Egyptian history. That none were found to suffice is proved by each having issued in some other: but each marks its own region of the East as the birthplace of one of the leading faiths of the world. We had now entered a country where no leading faith had its origin, but where all are found at this day, existing in vigour, but in conflict: and I, for one, had my mind eagerly awake to observe their operation. There was no more repose now, as for some weeks past, on a familiar faith, whose origin and progress we could trace from hill to hill, by valley, lake and river along our road. We could no more trace the simple Christianity of Christ himself, in visiting his haunts, but were entering upon the scene of an extraordinary congress of Deities, brought together, not to form a pantheon, but by the accidents of time, and the unsatisfied needs of human nature.

We began at the earliest date. Our resting-place, this first night in the Damascene territory, was at

Nimrod's Tomb. The very name carried us back further in the world's history than our imaginations had travelled since we left Egypt. It is true, the Jews hold traditions of Nimrod which would make him live no longer ago than Abraham. They say that Nimrod cast Abraham into the fire for not worshipping the Sun; but that Jehovah forbade the flames to touch him, and brought him into Canaan. But other traditions represent Nimrod as seceding from the company who built Babel, in disgust at their immoralities. This would make him much older than Abraham. At all events, in the traditions of Nimrod, and in the remains of the ancient pyramidal fire altars which are scattered about the country, we have traces of the earliest worship known to have been practised here. And this worship is believed to exist still, in certain recesses of the Lebanon. The worship of the Sun, as direct and unmixed as it ever was at Baalbec or at Samaria in Jezebel's days, is believed to be practised at this hour in some retired places of the land we were now entering upon.—Then, there is the old Egyptian method, with a good deal of its doctrine, existing among the Druses. It is very difficult to ascertain what their faith and worship are, because they have Mysteries, like the men of old; and these Mysteries are as well concealed as of old. Some suppose them to bear about the same relation to the Mohammedans as the Samaritans did to the Jews: and there may be among them about as much of Egyptian philosophy and faith mixed with their Mohammedanism as the Samaritans had of Assyrian faith and worship incorporated with their Judaism. Their incarnate Messiah, Hakim, (to whom

there is an inscription in a mosque at Cairo as the Supreme God) may contain some Jewish and some Christian elements: but the division of castes, and the practices of their Mysteries among the Druses remind one strongly of the old Egyptians:—and yet the Druses are an offset from Mohammedanism.—There are Jews, —a very few,—much like what the oriental Jews of these days usually are.—Then there are Christians of many sorts; and all so unlike anything that the biographers of Christ could have conceived of, that, but for the lights of history, it would be a wonder how they ever came by the name. Besides the ordinary Greek and Latin Christians, Armenians and Nestorians, there are the Maronites; a curious kind of Christians who, at one and the same time, practise monachism to an extraordinary extent, and preserve the old oriental Law of Revenge. They read the Psalter, and two or three puzzling books on Divinity,—Thomas Aquinas being their favourite author; and, for the rest, though they are in communion with Rome, they are nearly independent in their proceedings under their own patriarch, and present as barbarous a phase of Christianity as can anywhere be found.—Outnumbering all these religious bodies together are, of course, the Mohammedans,—the most interesting offset from Christianity that has yet been seen: not only from the derivation and history of the faith, but because its prevalence,—wider than that of any other faith, (—or any other familiarly known to us,—) shows what must be its adaptation to human nature, and, in that, how indispensable must be its appearance in the history of Man.—Here is a diversity of faiths, in this region

which has originated none! Instead of an influx of thought from various regions, issuing in a fresh and invigorating faith, we have here a cluster of religious sects, none communicating with any others, and none therefore deriving life from any new source. From the worship of Baal and Astarte to the ritual of Mohammed, all exists still: and we have only to rejoice that a religion so good, in comparison with the rest, as that of Mohammed, prevails over the others to the extent that it does.

This latest and most prevalent faith seemed almost too modern to be attended to this first day when, with every advance into the recesses of this awful old mountain region,—this Antilibanus, of which we used to read in our childhood almost as of the world before the flood, we seemed to be stepping over into the remote ages. Ascending from one table-land to another, we came out, late in the afternoon, upon very high ground, where the soil was wet, the crops poor, the wind very cold, and the inclosing mountains dim and dreary with haze and snow. As I repeatedly turned my horse to look behind me and to the left, the impression of what I saw was very awe-striking. Djebel Sheikh, whose snowy summit had appeared sky-high all the way from the further verge of the Plain of Esdraëlon, now seemed to have subsided to a common hill; so did the chain rise and swell as it retired north-eastward. Shrouded and ghost-like, the mountains closed us in: and as I gazed at them, I longed to look into their hidden vallies and recesses, to see how human faith was faring:—to see the shrines of Baal, and the smoke of his altars among the rocks; to hear from some platform

on the heights, the bell of the Maronite Convent chapel:—to look in upon the vigils of the Druses, as their initiated class, the Intelligents, held the Mysteries; and to see, in some Mohammedan village on the uplands, the pious families already in preparation for joining the next caravan, when it should set forth from Damascus for Mekkeh. The mountain chains of the earth retain in every way their conservative function. If they preserve untouched and unwasted their masses of mineral wealth, their treasure of gems, their accumulated snows, and the unsunned sources of all rivers, not less do they harbour and guard the characteristics of the tribes of men, and their confiding deposits of their respective faiths.

We stopped on a ridge, misty and cold, where there is a poor hamlet beside Nimrod's Tomb. The great Hunter, said to be the first of men who was made a king and wore a crown, is declared to be still lying under some stones, about three hundred yards from our tents. This is doubtless quite as true as that a building close at hand, whose ruined walls are composed of very large stones, is Nimrod's Castle. It appears that the tradition about the tomb is really old; and that ruins which have lost their names are all called after the tomb.—This hamlet is Kferhoura. Its situation is bleak; but there are two little fertile dells on either side of the ridge; and the people seemed to be tilling their fields with care and success. The evening was so cold that we should have been glad of a fire in our tent: but there was no more charcoal left than would be wanted to boil the kettle in the morning. All night, the wind was high; and the servants were kept from their rest,

knocking in the tent-pegs, that our whole establishment might not fly away.

On the 3rd of December, it had been proposed, on board our Nile boat, and agreed to *nem. con.* that we should go to Damascus. And now, on the morning of the 25th of April, we were within a few miles of it. Nothing could be less like our notions of Damascus and its climate than the spot we were on. It was far more like Westmoreland in March; and my heart warmed to it for that reason, in spite of the cold gusts, which brought mists and flying showers upon us from the mountains. Mrs. Y. and I sat under a rock and an umbrella, reading about the Druses, while the tents were struck:—quite a new piece of oriental experience! There was, however, such a rainbow as I suppose was never seen in Westmoreland,—first inclosing a group of mountains, and then confounding their outlines with its colours.—We descended considerably to the Field of Damascus,—the plain amidst which the city is placed: but still it was evident that this plain itself is high ground, in comparison with the Valley of the Jordan. The wind was so strong, and blew so incessantly, that we could not have travelled at all, if it had not been in our backs.

This Field of Damascus is very striking;—a plain of yellowish soil, scantily tilled, or, at least, showing to-day very scanty crops; with bushes and low trees sprinkled here and there, and many streams crossing the track; and the whole plain closed in by many-tinted mountains, of which Lebanon is the crown. Far away, at three hours' journey from the hills we descended, a black stripe lay straight across the plain,

which, as we approached, assumed more and more the appearance of what it really was, a "verdurous wall of Paradise." Above the great mass of verdure, sprang the loftiest poplars I ever saw; and when we came within a few miles, the pale minarets appeared above the woods, in rivalship with the dark poplars. Embosomed in these woods lies Damascus.

On our way, we saw the Mirage in great perfection. If I had not known what the plain really contained, I should have been completely deceived: and, as it was, I was perplexed about what was real and what mere semblance. Before us was a wide gleaming lake, with wooded shores. It was these shores that perplexed me; for I could allow for the water. As we approached, the vision flaked away, and formed again behind us; only, the waters behind looked grey and dark, whereas they were gleamy when in front. The woods on the shore resolved themselves into scrubby bushes,—the hiding places, one might suppose, of naughty little mocking elves. There is something unpleasant and disheartening in the sensation of the dissolution of a vivid mirage, even when one is not in want of water and shade. It gives one a strange impression that one must be ill: and when this is added to the real suffering of the wayfarer in the Desert, the misery must be cruel.

After riding three hours over this plain, and approaching the line of verdure so near as to see yellow walls and towers within the screen, Giuseppe told me we were at Damascus. I was rather disappointed; for I had read of the thirty miles of verdure and woods amidst which the city stands, and I had expected much

from the ride among the trees.—The walls turned out to be those of a village; and I soon discovered that Giuseppe called the woods Damascus, as well as the city. We rode on still for two hours, along green tracks, past gravel pits and verdant hollows, round villages, through cemeteries, under the shade of glorious groves! It is truly a paradise. The fields and orchards are one;—a thing I never saw elsewhere. Out of thick crops of wheat and barley and beans rise fruit and forest trees, which do not seem to injure the vegetation below with their shade. The abundant growth of the walnut exceeds that of any one tree I ever saw, unless it be the apple in the United States. We found that, besides exporting a great quantity of walnuts, a large proportion of the people make them their chief food, eating them as the Spaniards do chesnuts.—I saw a vine hanging out its young leaves and tendrils from a walnut, at least thirty feet from the ground. The citron perfumes the air for many miles round the city: and the fig trees are of vast size. The pomegranate and orange grow in thickets. There is the trickling of water on every hand. Wherever you go, there is a trotting brook, or a full and silent stream beside the track: and you have frequently to cross from one vivid green meadow to another, by fording, or by little bridges. These streams are all from the river beloved by Naaman of old. He might well ask whether the Jordan was better than Pharpar and Abana, the rivers of Damascus. These streams, the old Pharpar and Abana, join a little way from the city, and are called the Barrada. The waters are carried in innumerable channels over the whole field of verdure; then they

again unite in a single stream, which is lost in a lake or swamp called the Lake of the Meadow.

It was not easy to mistake the city walls when at last we came to them. They are rather high, but not so as entirely to exclude the view of the cupolas and minarets within. There are many towers upon the walls; but they are, for the most part, decapitated. We rode round at least half the city, as we were to enter by the eastern gate. It was something to remember that this is the oldest known city in the world. Abraham's steward came from Damascus, the man and the city being mentioned in Genesis, XV. 2. From its beauty and value, it has in all ages been an object of contention; but whenever shattered by sieges and foes, it has risen again; and here it is still, one of the gems of the earth. By this, no one means that its beauty is in its streets. Nothing can well be more ugly than they are, with their long lines of black yellow walls, unbroken but by a low ordinary door, here and there:—and the pavement is bad; though not so execrable as that of Jerusalem. There are few edifices which can be favourably seen within the walls: so that the charm of Damascus is not of that kind which we usually mean when we praise a city for beauty. The interior of its best houses is exquisite; and the bazaars are finer than those of Cairo, and, as I am told, than those of Constantinople. But the glory of El Sham, (as the Arabs call this beloved city of theirs,) is in its position, which truly warrants all the raptures of all ages, from the time when Abraham made Eliezer of Damascus his steward, till now.

Adjoining the gate by which we entered is a walled-

up portal, with two arches, now filled with masonry. This is the gate by which Paul entered Damascus: and the street by which we went from this entrance to our hotel, without a turn to the right or the left, is still called "Straight." In a street to the right of this, as you enter the city, is shown the house which is pretended to be that of Ananias; and in a niche of a chamber therein is the apostle said to have received his sight.—In the city wall is shown the aperture through which he was let down in a basket: and there is a tomb in the cemetery outside the eastern gate, which was pointed out to us as that of Gorgias, the soldier who, according to tradition, connived at Paul's escape, and was martyred for it.

As we rode through the long street to our hotel, we saw the people busy in bazaars which looked light and airy. They were selling fruit and vegetables, making clothes, and a large quantity of baskets. The people were everywhere civil to us. We should have looked for this civility as belonging to the manners of a capital city, but that the Mohammedans of Damascus have a character for savage and cruel bigotry, which certainly seems justified by their occasional persecutions of the Jews;—persecutions unequalled in barbarity in our times.—On arriving at the Italian hotel, we met two of our Desert comrades; and one of them kindly gave up his apartment to Mrs. Y. and me, as he was to depart the next day. This Italian hotel has been much vaunted by some visitors to Damascus; and it was ludicrous to read on the spot the descriptions with which English readers have been supplied of the court-yard and apartments of this hotel. As for the court-yard,

we saw no inlaid marbles, mosaic pavements, jets of murmuring fountains, gold fish, and fragrant orange trees: but instead of these, we found rude stone pavements, plaster walls daubed with red and blue: a deewán somewhat repulsive in aspect, and two or three fig-trees, and some pinks coming into flower about the tank. As for the apartments, that which was in kindness given up to us in exchange for a worse, was so perilously damp, and infested with beetles, that we refused to sleep in it a second night: and five snails were found in their slime under one of the beds. It is not right in travellers to romance about such houses as these, whether they be in the East or elsewhere; for future comers suffer by the complacency or indolence of the proprietor, thus induced. By remonstrance, we obtained better chambers: but the table is not to be praised: and there is no reason why it should not be good in a place so amply supplied with provisions as Damascus.

We saw more of the bazaars at Damascus than in any other city of our travels; the whole party having to make purchases for friends at home. The goldsmiths' bazaar was one of the most interesting;—not from the quality of the jewellery, but from the picturesque figures of the workers, bending their turbaned heads over the blow-pipes, in their little dim shops.—The alleys where galloon-weaving and silk-chain making, and the manufacture of slippers were carried on were very attractive, from the number of children employed. The little boys, weaving and shoemaking, were extremely industrious. They appeared to put their "Arab intensity" into their work, young as they were.

Sometimes, in curious contrast, a dealer of graver years would be seen fast asleep in the next shop, his head laid back on a comfortable pillow of goods, and his whole stock open to the attacks of any one who chose to steal.—The prettiest sight in connection with the bazaars was when a net was drawn over the front of the shop, to indicate that the owner was at prayers. Of course, theft would be perfectly easy during such an interval: but we were assured that it never happens: and purchasers wait, without any repining, for the re-appearance of the pious tradesman.

I was altogether disappointed in the silk goods of Damascus. I saw very few articles that I thought pretty, more or less, though the fabric was substantial enough. There was a vulgarity about the patterns,—especially about those which were the most costly,—which perplexed me till I learned the secret. The famous old Damascus patterns, the inheritance of centuries, and of which every Damascene is proud, have been imitated by our Manchester manufacturers, so as to become quite familiar to English eyes. The effect of this in Damascus is curious. The inhabitants import our cotton goods largely: and when they see their own patterns again, the gentlemen think they look as well as their own heavy silks; and they make their wives wear them instead,—greatly to the discontent of the ladies. The saving to the Damascene husbands is very great; as indeed it must be, if we consider the cost of dressing a dozen women in one house,—wives and handmaids,—in such costly articles as the heavy silks of Damascus.—For my own part, I would rather wear Manchester cottons. The dresses of Damascus silk

have no variety, and the scarves are stiff and cumbrous. —Perfumes are sold, very largely. Some of our party bought attar-of-roses and a decoction of sandal-wood, which however presently lost its scent.—The gentlemen looked at daggers and scimitars: but the blades of Damascus are not what they were; and I believe there was nothing very noticeable about these arms.

By the kindness of a resident who, as a physician, has freer access to families than any other gentleman could obtain, we saw the interiors of several handsome houses. They were truly beautiful,—with their marble courts, fountains, thickets of orange plants and other shrubs, and their lofty, cool, luxurious apartments. — In the house of a wealthy Christian gentleman, we saw several ladies, some Jewesses being on a visit at the same time. The dress of these Jewesses was superb. In addition to the coloured muslins, gold embroidery and handsome shawls round the waist, which all the ladies had, these Jewesses wore a profusion of diamonds. Their heads were entirely covered with natural flowers and clusters of diamonds, inserted in a close-fitting silk net. The painting of the eyes is somewhat deforming, as unnatural arts always are: but it is less hideous than the painting of the eyebrows. By association of ideas, a junction of the eyebrows gives to us an impression of intense thought: and nothing can be more disagreeably absurd than to see this artificial thoughtful frown on the excessively silly and inane face of an Eastern woman. They pull out the hair of their eyebrows, and paint a dark stripe straight across.—Their health is bad, of course, as they have no exercise but

shuffling over their marble pavements in splendid pattens. Their English physician has carried one important point in inducing some families to go annually for change to distant villages, where before they never went but on occasions of serious illness.

In one house that we visited, the eldest daughter, always jovial, and now not the less so for having been recently divorced, sat down beside me, and laughed with the delight of having visitors. She examined my clothes, stroking me and nodding; but fixed at last upon my gloves. After trying long and in vain to put them upon her enormous hands, she took my hands, to stroke them and laugh at the nails. She wanted me to admire hers, which were all dyed black; but they were too much as if they had all been pinched in the door. How all sympathy and sorrow about this lady's divorce evaporated during such intercourse, I need not say.—We saw several times the celebrated Esther, the Jewess, and her lover;—the pair who are ever anxiously supposing that our House of Lords is occupied in granting the lady a divorce from her insane husband. Esther's case is really a hard one. While she sees divorces going on all round her, whenever desired, she cannot be set free from her insane husband, because she happens to be a British subject. Some kind hearted but injudicious English travellers, who were really interested in Esther's case, led her to expect a decree of divorce from England; and she and her lover, who would not interest us on any other account whatever, are constantly in expectation of being able to marry. Esther has been written of as the beautiful Jewess of Damascus. I suppose

she would generally be considered handsome: but I saw several faces which pleased me more.

The British Vice-Consul invited us to dinner; and gave us a spectacle which we shall long remember. He invited the Jewish ladies I have mentioned, and some others; and several native Christian ladies, whose dress and manners are, for the most part, like those of their Mohammedan neighbours, except that they are not shut up in the hareem. The native wife of the French Consul was also there; and the gentleman and lady of the American Mission; and many besides. —The Vice-Consul and the physician I have mentioned live together; and they have one of the best houses in Damascus: and therefore, one of the most beautiful, for its size, in the world. At dinner, there were four guests besides our own party. The table was covered, very elegantly, with flowers and the dessert; and the dinner was handed round. A band of Turkish musicians was in one corner of the apartment: but they played so excessively loud that they were presently sent to amuse the native ladies, who were arriving, and awaiting us in the alcove of the court.

Our hosts had promised that we should see the celebrated sword-dance performed by their guests: and this was the great object of the evening, though it was no small advantage to see a party of Damascene gentry assembled in this manner. When we adjourned from the dining room to the alcove, we found the deewáns occupied by long rows of ladies, dressed in the extraordinary style of which our gentlemen friends had seen less than we had. Some gentlemen who

are not easily disconcerted, looked very awkward and shy when seated in a long row, on chairs and stools, immediately opposite the array of eastern belles. These ladies whispered to each other, laughed and looked about them. Esther and her lover giggled and flirted in a corner. The American lady went about with cheerful courtesy from one to another: and our hosts were everywhere. Still, all was so dull that I began anxiously to hope for the sword-dance. Time went on, and we heard nothing of it. A tray was brought, and set down in the middle of the alcove, with cucumbers, fruits, wine and arrack,—excessively strong. Some of the ladies took up each a cucumber, and ate it, rind and all, swallowing after it some arrack, to promote its digestion. I am assured that ladies will sometimes eat three cucumbers in succession, in this way, with a glass of arrack to each.—A pause followed, broken only by a gust of wind which blew out some of the candles, and brought a few drops of rain, which sent us into the house. Then I supposed we were to have the sword-dance: but one of my companions told me privately that it was not to take place, and advised me to ask no explanation at present.

In the fine apartment we had entered, there was a repetition of the scene in the alcove:—music, whispering and giggling; cucumbers and arrack:—there were also excellent coffee and ice creams for us Europeans. In about another hour, the native ladies left their seats, crowded together, drew their veils about them, and departed: and we went away with the last of them.—When we reached home, I found there had been a scene behind the curtain, and that it was very well that

the evening had passed off so quietly as it did. As far as we could understand the matter,—but it was never quite clear to us,—the case was this. During the dreadful persecution of the Jews at Damascus, a few years since, the French Consul was believed to have been their enemy, and to have aggravated their sufferings. When the Jewish ladies found his lady this evening at the Consul's, they and their Christian friends were hurrying away again, in great wrath, when our host the physician went to them, and remonstrated, telling them what a fatal insult their departure in this manner would be to their host, the Vice-Consul. On this representation, they consented to stay, but stipulated that they should not be asked to dance, or amuse themselves in any way.—The part of the story which we could not understand was why these women fell into such wrath against the French Consul's lady this particular evening, when we had seen them meet in a morning visit without any demonstrations of ill-will. There must be more in the matter than we comprehended, no doubt.

As for the persecution to which this story relates,—there is no part of the world,—or of the civilised world, at least,—where the traveller can go, without coming upon the traces of religious persecution. He finds it in Massachusetts and in England; in Germany and Egypt; at Jerusalem and at Damascus. Nowhere can men leave other men free in regard to matters of Opinion. In countries like ours, where the laws forbid aggression on life, property and outward liberty, on account of matters of Opinion, it is common to say that there is no persecution: but it is no more possible in England

and Germany than it ever was in Spain or Italy, for men to hold the diversity of opinions which men were made to hold without being the worse for it, in reputation and peace of mind, if not in liberty and property. I am not speaking of this now as a matter of censure, but as a curious matter of fact. There could not be so universal a tendency to intolerance without some overwhelming reason for it:—some cause deep-seated in human nature, or stringently operative in human circumstances. Besides the causes which lie deep in human nature,—the need of sympathy, the love of repose upon convictions, the pride which is usually more or less implicated in our judgments, and the partial view which men inevitably take of every subject upon which their minds are not in suspense;—besides all these causes of dislike to adverse opinions, there is, almost universally prevalent, an idea of danger, spiritual danger, incurred by the holding of any opinions but those which the parties respectively believe to be right. It is only a man here and there who knows, and acts upon the knowledge, that the greatest safety in the universe is in truth; and that the most direct path to safety is in the pursuit of truth. And perhaps it is even more rare still to meet with one who sees that all genuine faith is,—other circumstances being the same, —of about equal value. The value is in the act of faith, more than in the object; as is shown by the glorious men who have lived under every system of religious faith, and the bad men who have flourished equally under the worst and under what we are accustomed to consider the best.—Of course, it is of very high importance that the objects of faith should be the loftiest and

the purest that, in any particular age, can be attained. A noble-minded man cannot take up with a low superstition when a higher system of faith is open to him: or he will suffer spiritually if he does: but he may be as noble in the thorough devotion of his faculties to the highest abstraction of his time as a successor may be under a higher abstraction of a later time. His need and his prerogative are to exercise his highest faculties in faith and obedience, and to gratify the best part of his nature by the contemplation and attainment of "the beauty of holiness," whatever be the names which he and others give to the Ideas which are the guiding stars of his life. An Egyptian of 5000 years ago might attain as lofty a moral state by living in obedience to that highest conception to which he gave the name of Amun or Osiris, as a Jew of similar nature and powers who devoted himself to the same loftiest ideas under the name of Jehovah. And thus again, a Jew who was of too lofty a mind to live in a spirit of fear towards the "Jealous God" of whom his lower brethren conceived, might, in his spirit of faith and obedience, penetrate through the apparatus of sacrifices and a preceptive law, to as clear a view, and as hearty an allegiance to the Father of all men, as a Christian could reach in a subsequent age. The polytheism of Egypt was a low state of religion for the mass of men; but it did not, and could not, preclude the spiritual elevation of individuals. The Mosaic Law and ritual were a low stage for the bulk of the Jewish people, in comparison with what has existed since; but it did not preclude the utmost spiritual loftiness of individual men. The Christian religion, corrupted as it has been, has resem-

bled but too much a mythology of which Judaism would have been ashamed, and has fallen short of its purpose accordingly, in its operation on the masses of men: but no one will deny that there have been men belonging to the Church in its darkest times whom the purest times of Christianity might have owned. And so on, through all the faiths of mankind.—The case being so, men afflict themselves needlessly about one another's safety, as regards points of spiritual belief. We may and must wish, for the sake of men at large, that mankind should conceive of God as a Father rather than as a King; as just and merciful, rather than as jealous and vindictive: but it is not for us to mistrust any human brother, or suppose that his best powers may not work out his highest good without his ideas being exactly correspondent with our own.—Instead of this trust, however,—a trust which faith, love and humility alike require,—we assume that a belief which differs from our own must bring forth bad results, be the qualities of the holder what they may: and then we naturally proceed the one step further, and conclude that those bad results have been brought forth. The Jew would think Socrates an idolator; as the Athenians believed him, in the worst meaning of the term, an atheist. The Christian cannot make out the Jew to be either idolator or atheist; but he imputes to him a constant active hatred to Jesus, because he still looks for the Messiah to come. The Mohammedan, judging of Christianity by what he sees in the Greek and Latin churches, regards all Christians as idolators on the one hand and infidels on the other. He holds with a well-grounded zeal to the monotheism which he sees to be

lost from the Christianity that is before his eyes; and to the spiritualism of his faith, which excludes a priesthood; and by that exclusion, maintains its vital power. The hatred with which he regards the Christian is as virulent as might be expected from his imputing to him at once both kinds of error,—idolatry in worshipping three gods and a multitude of saints, and infidelity in denying the greatest and chief Prophet of God. "These damned Christian infidels" is the description of all of us who go to the East, from the Bishop of Jerusalem to the cabin-boy of a ship. As imputation follows prejudice in a natural course, the Jew believes that the Sun-worshippers of the Lebanon revel in obscene rites, and are in alliance with devils:—the Christian believes that the Jews crucify a child every Passion-week: and the Mohammedan believes that the Christian wantonly sports with damnation by reviling the Prophet, and rebels against God by upholding the doctrine of free-will,—being thus twice over an outcast through infidelity.—There was something painful, yet salutary, in witnessing in the East these mere exaggerations of our own ways of regarding one another at home. When we witnessed the vindictive wrath of the Jews against their usurping and tyrannical neighbours, —and when our monk-guide at Nazareth told us, in all earnestness, that the Jews had crucified a child in the Holy Week just passed,—and when we were insulted and reviled by the Faithful, and were in the very places where they lately tortured the Jews with torments too horrible to be written down, I took the lesson home, and devoutly resolved upon two things:—never to hold back from declaring what I believe to be the truth; and

never to assume as facts the worst results which may proceed from what I believe to be error. While we see so many men who fall below the quality of their professed faith, and, happily, so many also who rise far above it, it is surely wisest, in the first place, to judge men as little as possible, and, in the next, to judge of them, where we must, by their individual powers and qualities, and not by the philosophy of the faith they hold. This is only saying in other words that we are to know men by their fruits: but, long as this mode of judgment has been commended to mankind, we seem to need to be reminded of it as much as ever; as much perhaps in our English homes and associations as the Christians at Nazareth, and the Mohammedans at Damascus, who punish the Jews, not for anything they have actually done, but for what a hostile imagination and a logical course of reasoning indicate that they might have done.

The subordination of Christianity to Mohammedanism in the East is a curious spectacle, from its novelty, to travellers from a Christian country. It is impossible to quarrel with the fact on the spot;—not only because it is obviously absurd to quarrel with a fact of such magnitude and import, but because it is plain to every unprejudiced eye that the fact ought to be what it is. The Mohammedan not only knows that his faith includes a larger proportion of mankind than any other, so as to make even Christendom look insignificant beside it, but he reasonably regards Mohammedanism as the reformed faith which raises men above any elevation they could reach by Christianity. Seeing Christianity as he sees it, chiefly in the Greek church,

this belief is reasonable. He may well think it a great advance upon the religion of the Greek church for men to worship One God;—a God really and truly One, without subterfuge, or those metaphysical multiplications which he knows to have constituted the idolatry of the East. He may well think it a great advance upon the worship of the Greek church to have no priesthood intruding between God and his Maker. He feels himself to be irrefragably right in his solution of the great difficulty which lies at the bottom of all theological differences,—or rather in his conclusion about the Existence of Evil;—for solution there is none: nor is there any indication that there ever can be. The Predestinarian doctrine of the Mohammedan is the strong point of his religion, as the necessarily imperfect adoption of the Free-will doctrine of the modern Christian church is its weak point.—With all this strength on the side of Mohammedanism, in contrast with the abased condition of Christianity in the East, it can be no wonder that the more modern faith prevails immeasurably in proportion to the more ancient and vilely-corrupted belief. Even to us of the western world, who must necessarily be insensible to its affinities with Eastern thought, and suitability to Eastern habits of feeling and of life, there is abundant reason apparent why Mohammedanism should have spread and taken root as widely and deeply as it has done. And to us of the western world it must be clearer than to the people of the East, why Mohammedanism cannot always endure, however long it may yet serve the needs of its believers.

The fatal imperfection of Mohammedanism appears to

be its supposing Law, made known by precept, to be as positive, that is, as fully revealed, in Morals as in physical Nature. In Mohammedanism, there is not the slightest conception of a religion of Principles. Fact and positive precept are all that Mohammedanism contemplates: and these are not enough for a religion which is to endure. The Prophet was honest and sound-minded in excluding miracles from his scheme. Marvels are too familiar in the East, too natural in their occurrence, to be needed as an evidence there: and the Prophet was as well aware as we are that even if they were an evidence of physical power of a preternatural order, they could not possibly be an evidence of truth of doctrine. The powers attributed to devils and false prophets has always decided this matter in the East. And Mohammed was honest and sound-minded in rejecting a priesthood, or any other intervention between men and God. This strong point he probably took from Christianity;—the Mohammedan traditions of Christianity relating to a time prior to the fatal institution of a priesthood. But Mohammed was no philosopher, any more than he was an impostor. He had the strongest and most definite notions of the duty and wisdom of absolute obedience to the immutable Will of God: but he had no idea of that will being communicated in any other way than by a collection of precepts, and by the unmistakeable language of events. Of the governing power of Principles, he never formed any conception. He never recognised them at all as guiding and governing powers;—as that voice of God which Christianity assumes them to be.—It may be true that "Arab intensity,"—the passionate nature of

the Orientals which makes them in so far children,—necessitated the offer of a preceptive religion: as the similar temperament of the Hebrews had before done in their case: but a religion appropriate to children can never be permanent and universal. It may last very long and spread very widely still,—wherever, and as long as, there are tribes of a childish cast or habit of mind in Asia and Africa: but it cannot serve the purposes of the whole race: and herein lies the inestimable superiority of Christianity;—of the Christianity of Jesus himself. The whole purpose and scope of his teaching was to imbue men with the spirit of faith and morals; to detach them from forms and preceptive guidance, and introduce them to the prerogative of their own reason, conscience, faith and affections. While Mohammedanism appealed but partially to the strength of the human soul,—to its courage, patience, and obedience, (being lax to its indolence, both intellectual and spiritual,) Christianity appealed to all its powers, and put it in its own charge,—setting all things, in earth and heaven, within its reach, on condition of the exertion of all its powers.—Mohammed gave endless instructions to men what to do. But He who so well knew what was in man, knew that men can do anything that they see: and Christianity therefore gives the light, instead of offering a hand to guide men through the dark. It gives the light, calling upon men to find, train, and exercise their powers of sight.

Most miserably however has Christianity surrendered this life-giving influence here, in the presence of Mohammedanism. We went to visit the Greek Patriarch and his chapel and new church. How

much more Christian do the mosques look in their simplicity, than these idolatrous Greek churches with their profane mythological pictures, and their multitudinous rites and observances!—In this church we saw a very fine carved screen, half of which is spoiled by gilding, which is to extend over the whole, when it is finished. The carving is very fine, and most elaborate: and yet the whole screen, extending completely across the church, costs only 120*l*. The Patriarch, a white-bearded man of seventy-eight, of the commonest aspect, was in a state of high delight, which he expressed with a very innocent glee, at the reception he had met with in his recent progress round his diocese. He told us that the people came out in crowds to carry him into their towns: a treatment very unlike that which he will ever meet with in Damascus, where the Mohammedans invent tortures for Jews. It is curious how the Predestinarians of the world have followed one another,—as here the Mohammedans have followed the Pharisees,—in punishing adverse opinion more severely than immoral conduct. Hence, no doubt, has arisen the bad character of the Mohammedans as spreading their religion by the sword. Their Prophet did not desire or contemplate this, but used only reason and persuasion during the greater part of his course, being driven to the use of the sword at last, after a duration of meekness and patience quite wonderful in an Arab of the Desert. The charge of proselyting by violence appears to Eastern travellers as misplaced in regard to the Prophet and his original faith as that of sensualism. One needs but to travel in Mohammedan countries to take a quite different view from the popular European

one of these matters. While it is true, and honourably true, of Mohammedanism, that it respects, more than any other religion, the natural instincts of man, it is no less true that it ordains much asceticism, and that it has ever operated as a check upon sensualism, rather than as a sanction to it. Under it, men are, as under every other religion, as various as they would be without it. There are devout ascetics, mystics, temperate men and profligates, as there are under all faiths, from Buddhism to Quakerism: but the operation of Mohammedanism is in favour of temperance,—place, time and circumstance of its institution being considered.

One of the most affecting sights to us in Damascus was that of the ancient Christian cathedral converted into a mosque. We could not enter it, but we daily looked into it from the bazaars. Its court was large, light and airy, adorned with Corinthian pillars, and with squares of marble mosaic. What more we saw of it was by climbing up to a house-top by ladders, to view what remains of its grand entrance. This remnant of early Christian zeal looks mournful enough. The rich pediment and pillars,—the pediment shattered, and three of the six pillars decapitated,—are hidden and almost lost among sordid Arab dwellings; and the Christian is excluded from courts which were built and adorned by Christian hands.

There is a place, two miles from Damascus, which is visited by people of all the three faiths;—Jobah, declared, and reasonably, to be the place indicated in Genesis, XIV. 15, as Hobah, whither Abraham went in pursuit of Lot, who had been carried away:—"unto Hobah, which is on the left side of Damascus." I own

that one chief interest of Damascus and its environs is in their undisputed antiquity. To the synagogue at Jobah, however, another interest pertains. It is believed by the Jews that the Law was preserved here when Titus besieged Jerusalem; and there are now thirty-six copies of the Law there which are considered very valuable. On the floor of this synagogue is shown a space railed in, to commemorate a deed which we should all be glad to forget,—whether it be fact or mere imputation.* The spot is said (but no one believes it) to be that where Elisha anointed Hazael King of Syria.—We were next taken down, by four or five steps, to a very small grotto, where, as we were assured, Elijah was fed by ravens,—there having once been a window through which the birds could reach him.

The house of Naaman is shown: but our friends advised us not to go. It is converted into a Christian Leper Hospital; and there is more useless pain in visiting it than the occasion is worth. Dr. T., the physician, told me that the lepers are chiefly scrofulous subjects; and that damp and poor diet are the great disposing causes of leprosy. The disease is not found to be contagious, no instances being known of its affecting those who dress the sores of the patients. In the young, incipient leprosy may often be combated: but for adults, nothing can be done beyond alleviation. They suffer much and long, usually dying of tubercular or related diseases, at last. It certainly appears, however, that this is one of the diseases destined to die out under the spread of civilisation.

In the course of our rides, we were repeatedly

* 2 Kings, VIII. 7—15.

conducted by our hospitable friends to the Cafés in the environs, which are so celebrated wherever Damascus is heard of. How astonished our families at home would have been to see us in a magic glass at such seasons of refreshment! They would have seen us sitting under a trellice of vines, or round a reservoir, with a row of nargeelehs before us, and coffee and ices at hand:—a brook, containing the waters of the old Pharpar, flowing into the garden, among plots of vegetables and thickets of fruit-trees, whose boughs were bending and cracking with the weight of their produce. Twigs of a plum-tree, thickly studded with green fruit, were offered to us, to carry away; and the stem of my chibouque was one day embossed with fresh-gathered roses.—The Cafés within the city, where the people go to smoke and talk, are very inferior to those in the environs. They are too much trodden, and too town-like; and the wooden platforms are sordid. But all are blessed with running waters and the shade of trees; and all afford exquisite pictures of grouped figures to the eye of the passing stranger.

Our rides were always charming,—the green tracks winding among orchards and fields, coming out sometimes on a little green eminence, and sometimes on a meadow, or a bridge, or a reach of the river. The old trees, ponds, water-courses and grassy nooks were very English on the whole, but luxuriant beyond English imagination. One tree in the city,—a plane growing in the middle of a bazaar,—was measured by us, and found to be thirty-eight feet in the girth.—By far the finest of our rides was that which showed us the celebrated view of the city from above the suburb of the

Salaheeyeh. We rode for nearly an hour through narrow streets, and past many mosques, before we found ourselves outside the city. Then we ascended the hill-side, not as high as the grottoes, but above the cemetery: and thence, looking back, saw a picture which appeared as if it must melt away in its own beauty. It is this view which makes the Mohammedans declare Damascus to be the first of their four terrestrial paradises. The rich yellow city, with its forty minarets, springs up from the midst of the glorious verdure which looks as thick as a forest for miles round. Verdure springs up within the city too; and a village here, a mosque there, and then a bridge, or a reach of road or water, peeps out from amidst the surrounding wood; so that the intermingling of city and forest is most tempting to the fancy, as well as delicious to the eye. Beyond the oasis lies the plain; and beyond the yellow plain, the tinted hills on every side: their hues soft and repressed, as if to set off the brilliancy of the gem which lies in the midst. I never saw anything like this again; —anything nearly so sweet and gay. We passed over the same spot in leaving the city; but the morning light was not favourable to it: and it was not like the same scene.

Among the mosques which we visited in the course of this ride, was one which might have been, as we saw it, a painter's dream. Two soldiers were lounging in the weedy gateway. In the long grass within lay the sculptured ornaments of the dismantled chamber. A broken reservoir was in the midst, its waters brimming over the sides into the grass; and a soft green light was cast over it by the pendulous, leafy fig-tree

above. A shattered column lay at hand, moist and garlanded with ferns.

Very unlike this was the Mosque of the Derweeshes, which we next visited. It must once have been handsome; but it has now all the sordidness of decay, without any of the grace of desertion. The lead is stripped off its many cupolas by the weather; and the colours are stained on the walls: but the surrounding buildings are made into a shabby sort of stables, in which live eleven Derweeshes. They drone and beg, and say prayers, and live in the style of our cattle. They cut up the courts with mean wooden palings, within which beans were growing in the undrained plots which are like ponds after rain.

The entrances to the city through the deep arches of the bazaars are very fine, when the shops are closed, — as they were this day. We paused within the shadow and quietness, and looked out upon the gay and busy life afar, and the minarets,—one cased with green tiles, and others yellow and white,—glittering in the sun.—During the eight days of our abode at Damascus, how many such pictures we saw! and how clear it was that such would daily delight the eye, if we were to pass there a lifetime of eighty years! Dr. T. likes living at Damascus, and encourages his countrymen to invest money in mulberry plantations in Syria, and establish their families there. Few will be tempted to do so, at the cost of forfeiting the privileges of law and government;—of living in entire dependence on the protection of the Consul, whose own position is always a precarious one. I would not live in Syria, on any inducement whatever: but that

English persons do live there, and like it, proves what the charm must be of the beauty of the country and its cities: for there is really nothing else:—neither law nor government, nor society, nor a healthy climate.—A physician is, as he ought to be, a privileged person everywhere: but there is little encouragement to any other vocation: for the richest proceeds of mulberry-growing may be swept away at any moment by political or social change. There is bodily luxury,—as much as can be enjoyed without health: and there is a perpetual feast of beauty to the eye. This is, I believe, all, except for those who go for patriotic or benevolent objects. Such objects, of course, create an all-sufficient happiness at Damascus, as everywhere else.

CHAPTER II.

AIN FIJJI.—ZEBDANY.—BAALBEC.—THE BEKAA.

On our way out of Damascus, we passed the great military Hospital begun by Ibraheem Pasha, when he was master of the country. The works were stopped when he retired; and now the stones are taken, one by one, from the unfinished walls, by any persons who find it convenient to use them. From place to place in Palestine and Syria, we came upon the deserted works of Ibraheem Pasha: and everywhere we found the people lamenting the substitution of Turkish for Egyptian rule. The Turks, it is true, like the lightness of their present taxation, which is pretty much what it pleases them to make it: and every body knows that the rulers of Egypt impose high taxes: but the religious toleration which existed under Ibraheem Pasha, and his many public works, cause him to be fervently regretted; — chiefly by the Christians, but also by many others. If there is at present any government at all in the districts we passed through, it is difficult to discern: and of course, the precariousness of affairs is extreme.

We were to spend two nights on the road between Damascus and Baalbec; and the first was to be at Ain Fijji,—five hours and a half from Damascus.—

We followed the course of the Barrada; or rather, we kept its course in view, which it was easy to do, from the belt of verdure which fringed its channel. In contrast with the limestone hills around, this vegetation looked black. In the hollows of the hill-range, there were islands of verdure, with a minaret to each, a mill, and a few habitations peeping out above the wood; miniature likenesses of Damascus, and only less beautiful than it. The prettiest of these settlements was Bassena. While we looked down upon the Barrada,—the life of the region, without which it would be a desert,—the snowy peaks which shut in the valley of the Jordan rose to the south-west, and the mountains of the Antilibanus range, which we were now about to cross, seemed to enlarge every moment.

There was, of course, a greater abundance of water as we approached the mountains: and, of course, the tokens of popular industry increased in proportion. There were fig orchards, well cleared and fenced, on the ridges of the nearer eminences; and plantations of mulberries and vines below. Wherever we fell in with a watercourse, there were spreading trees, good crops, bridges, mills and rows of dwellings.—It was rather late in the afternoon when I, who was riding first, turned into a recess among the hills which I thought so far more beautiful than any spot we had ever encamped in, that I turned back to intreat that we might stop here. My companions were of my mind; but the servants assured us that Ain Fijji, which was only half an hour off, was better in every respect. We agreed to go and see: and we could

return if we preferred this nook, of which I had scarcely a doubt when we left it. From a promontory of the mountain, a grassy level spread out,—little larger than would be required for our camp. The Barrada bounded this bit of turf, rushing in a semi-circle under a fine precipice. Nothing could be more delicious than the gush of the clear abundant waters under the rocks, which overhung the stream enough to cast a shadow upon it.—The way out of this nook was by a path so rugged and difficult that I suspected we should not return, however disappointed we might be in Ain Fijji. Nobody, however, was ever disappointed in Ain Fijji, or, I should think, will be, while its waters flow.

As we passed by the village, the people appeared very civil: and a man put himself at the head of our troop, to show us where to encamp. He led us past a glorious old ruin, and by a descending road, where we heard the gush of waters from below and behind the poplars which made a screen on our left hand. The guide presently pulled down enough of an orchard wall on the right to allow the horses and laden mules to enter, and told us we might encamp in the orchard.—From our platform we overlooked the junction of the Barrada and Fijji below; and we dined under leafy walnut and fig-trees, with blossoming pomegranates pushing in between, and the gush of waters for our music. A group of very handsome and well-behaved women and children stood looking at us, offering now and then some friendly attention. High mountains encompassed the whole scene, and the sunset light upon the eastern summits was gorgeous. The waters

of the Barrada had some of the whitish sulphureous tinge which is seen in the Jordan; while the stream from Ain Fijji was almost as blue as the sky. The currents flowed along, side by side, without mingling at all, for some way from their junction.

I knew that one might trace the whole course of the Fijji without any great exertion. It is, in fact, called the shortest river in the world, being only one hundred yards in length. Yet it is an abundant river for that space. The natives, being unwilling to believe that this can be all of it, declare it to come underground from the Euphrates.—I went, however, to see for myself all that is really known about it. Never did I visit such a spring. It bursts, an abundant river, from cavernous rocks, faced with stone, and graced by a temple to the Nymphs, which crowns the precipice. I got down, by the help of detached blocks and the roots of trees, and peeped into the caverns where the waters were welling up in the deep shadow, and rushing out to the light. There were hewn stones lying in the river, and remains of a cornice upon the face of rock. Above these were, as I now saw, two temples, of massive structure. The lower one had been vaulted, with an arched portal opening to the river. Never was heathen temple more exquisitely placed. A tall fig-tree, and a group of young poplars were now growing up within the walls: and it was all shrouded in groves, so that it could hardly be seen except from below, while it commanded the rushing stream, and was lighted by glancing reflections from its waters. A villager came to me, and showed me, by intelligible signs, everything I could wish to know; and he said nothing about baksheesh.

As I returned to the camp, I met in succession several women, leading their flocks of goats and kids; and men with asses laden with wood; one of them spinning with the distaff. They all gave me civil and cheerful greetings. We seemed to have got into a little paradise of good manners, as well as beauty.

In this sense of security, I crossed the river, the next morning, while our people were breaking up the camp, and followed a hill-path to a considerable height, whence I could overlook the whole basin, with its woods and hidden waters. I was surprised to see how high up the hills vegetation was carried,—there being olive-groves, and even mulberries on ledges of the mountain where I could hardly have supposed they would grow. When I afterwards saw the western side of Lebanon, I found how much higher still men will climb and fix their dwellings, when they obtain a return for their pains. When seeing such things, in a country where property is eminently precarious, it is strange and painful to think of the Irish, lounging and languishing beside seas full of fish, and wide spaces of uncultivated land. If they were set down, as these people are, empty-handed among the rocky slopes of Antilibanus, with nobody to look to for protection or aid, what would they do? Would they lie down and die? or would they, like these people, build themselves houses of stone or mud, and make coarse and rude tools of the wood and stone of the mountain, and prepare terraces on the bare uplands, and grow fruit and mulberry leaves for barter, and grain for their own fo8d? And what would not these Syrian peasants say of their good fortune, if they had at hand bays of the

sea swarming with fish, and large tracts of soil wanting nothing but labour to make it fruitful? It was strange and painful to think of these things: but yet there was some encouragement, too. When I saw what could be done by a willing and laborious peasantry in such a district as this, it seemed impossible that Ireland should not easily support her people when a new generation sets to work in earnest, like the inhabitants of these Syrian mountains. As we rode away from Ain Fijji, the people about the camp attended us till we were fairly off on the road, and then offered us a blessing such as Christians rarely meet with from Mohammedans. They cried after us "God be with you!"

The bridge of El Souk, two hours from Ain Fijji, is in a beautiful pass, where the rocks approach so as to leave only a strip of green on either side of the Barrada. These rocks have not only holes, supposed to be sepulchral, but tablets or panels which, though uninscribed, tell a curious tale. Their presence here is a mystery. The little bridge lightly spans an emerald-green fall of the river; and the tufts of shrubs along the grassy banks of the stream are beautiful. A conduit is cut in the rocks; and it crosses the stream with the bridge. A local tradition declares this conduit to have been made by a woman: and the learned of course suggest that this woman may have been Zenobia.

We followed the Barrada to a beautiful waterfall, among the shrubs to the left of our track; and then we withdrew a little, crossing a long stretch of table-land, and seeing the quiet and now lessening stream through all its windings up to Zebdany, near which it takes its rise.

Zebdany is halfway between Damascus and Baalbec: but for three miles before reaching it, it was difficult to believe we were not in England. I thought at least that this must be one of the districts where English capital, managed by English agents, is invested: but I could not learn that it was so,—such scenes of British enterprise lying further to the north. We entered upon lanes;—home-like lanes, with ditches on either side, and hedges of blackthorn, elder, sycamore, brambles, hawthorn, nearly out, and briar roses. The gates were like ours: everything was like home (for the lanes were even muddy) except that there were vines and mulberries in the fields, where with us there would have been apples and hops. There was nothing tempting in the village. As in duty bound, we inquired, as ordered by preceding travellers, for Adam's tomb: and the people took us to the cemetery! We climbed to the upper story of a house, to see some Syrian silkworms. They were in trays: very small as yet; and as disagreeable as they are everywhere else. —Our tents had gone forward meantime: we rode after them, over hill-tracks, for three hours more, passing a village where the houses were built of loose stones, and no longer of mud; and at length saw our tents pitched in a beautiful dell, beside a lively stream. There were few or no people near, but goatherds tending their immense flocks upon the hills.

We were now only a few hours distant from Baalbec, and on the next evening, (May 5th) we were to rest under the walls of the great Temple of the Sun. The first few miles of our ride in the morning were charming,—winding beside the streams, and over grassy

levels, and across fallow fields, till we entered upon a barer region of limestone hills,—the outer skirts of the Antilibanus range.—I believe travellers usually approach Baalbec from the south, by the Bekaa: and some say that that is the most imposing approach. We reached it by a lateral pass, from the south-east, looking down upon it from a considerable distance. Travellers always stand up for their own way of first approaching a great object,—knowing that to be very fine, and knowing no other: and I might say that, from what I saw of the aspect of Baalbec, the second day, from the Bekaa, I should think the descent upon it better, for a first view, than an approach on the same level. But there is no saying, as we can have but one first impression; and I will only declare that we were quite satisfied with our first view of Baalbec.

The Bekaa is the Valley, sometimes called Hollow Syria, lying between the Antilibanus range and the loftier Lebanon. It is watered by the Lietani river,—believed to be the ancient Leontes,—which rises a little above Baalbec, and flows in a nearly straight course, till it reaches the Mediterranean above the ancient Tyre. It was by this Hollow Way that the ancient armies used to march, whose expeditions so largely affected the fate of the Hebrews throughout their residence in Palestine. The Syrians were wont to march down this valley to their sieges of Samaria; and it was by this way that the Egyptians, landing at Tyre, came up against Damascus. This conspicuous and much-frequented valley was a fitting place for the great Temple of the Sun;—both for the honour of the god, and for the convenience of native and foreign

worshippers. The edifices of Baalbec are situated on one side of the valley, which is here about seven miles wide. They stand indeed near the base of the eastern mountains.

We had seen the Bekaa at intervals during the morning, when the hills on our left opened enough to disclose what was behind them. The aspect of the eastern declivities of Lebanon, on the other side of the valley, was very remarkable. The summits were streaked with snow; below which the heights were of the usual mountain colouring of grey, purple and green. Below, their skirts were too variegated and gaudy for beauty, the slopes being white,* shaded into scarlet and crimson, which ran into the softer tints above. The Bekaa looked dim and uniform, and as if it must be as sultry as the plain of the Jordan in summer.—We turned to the left at last, down upon the Bekaa, and came upon a sudden view of Baalbec below us,—its six gigantic columns standing up above the great mass of ruins. The trees were few and scattered, instead of being like the woods we had seen investing all the towns, from Damascus onwards.

Before going to our tents, which were pitched beside the Temple of the Sun, we turned a little southwards, to the quarries, whence the stone was drawn for these mighty edifices. The whole area of these quarries is very large and striking; but the great marvel of the place is the unremoved block, whose bulk exceeds that of any stones we saw in Egypt: and, I believe, that of any other known block in the world. According to Pococke, this stone measures sixty-eight feet in length,

* From whence the name is derived,—Lebanon signifying White.

nearly eighteen feet in width, and nearly fourteen in thickness. There are stones in one of the temple walls measuring each from sixty to sixty-three feet in length, and of proportionate breadth and thickness: and these are built into the wall at some height from the ground. It has been observed, however, that the ground within is higher than that without; and some have supposed, —under the great difficulty of accounting for the elevated position of such masses,—that they were brought on rollers over high ground, deposited in their places, and the earth then cut away from them. But this does not appear to lessen the difficulty where such masses lie one upon another: for we have only to choose between the two impossible tasks of lowering the under series, and bringing the higher up hill. In truth, we know nothing about it; and the dealings of the ancients with such masses is a thing quite beyond our comprehension now.

The children about our tents were beautiful. I sat down, and collected them round me, to see an orange divided, and then to eat it up; and it was amusing to perceive how like they were to children at home,—in the boldness of one,—the shyness of another, and the waggery of a third. While I was thinking so, a beautiful girl stood between her mother and me, looking from one to the other. She held by the hand a shy little brother who would have hidden himself and lost his bit of orange, if I had not kept it for him till he could be induced to come. His sister now, on obtaining a smile from her mother, came to me, and most gracefully kissed my hand. This was not like an English child. Whenever I have travelled abroad, I

have wished that we could, in the training of children, cease to interfere with natural language in the way we do. I am aware that there is much to be said on both sides of this really important question; and no one can be further than I am from wishing to return to those demonstrations of feeling which belong essentially to a state of barbarism. One would not wish to hear the howl at funerals in England; nor to see mourners tearing their clothes, or throwing dust on their heads, —any more than one would relish savage laughter and capering on joyful occasions. But the reason why one does not wish to see these barbarous signs of emotion is because violent emotions are themselves barbarous. The chastened emotions of the wise may be left to express themselves naturally: and their natural expression will be simply by the countenance and the tone of the voice. The natural language will be subdued only because the emotions are: and there appears no reason for the suppression of gesture and the training of the carriage, in relation to the small occasions of hourly life in which express discipline is out of place. English children are just as animated and graceful in their infancy as any little Arabs or Italians: but by ten years old they are subdued, if possible: and if they cannot be subdued, they are of course rude. In England, we see many a girl of the age of this Baalbec child, who is interesting from the mobile character of her countenance, in spite of her immoveable attitudes. Why should she have been deprived of the freedom of unconsciously expressing herself by the language of gesture, during the years when she is too shy for the full use of speech, and before she has obtained adequate command

of it? The ungainly and unnatural inexpressiveness of childish manners in England is one of the most striking and uncomfortable impressions the traveller receives, on his return home; as the mobile grace of children and adults has been one of his daily pleasures abroad.

Almost before Mrs. Y. and I were dressed, our tent-curtains were thrown open, and a train of five ladies entered. As Alee was engaged interpreting between the gentlemen and some visitors in their tent, our position was rather awkward: or rather, it would have been so, if our visitors had not appeared extremely happy. They stroked our gowns, looked merrily in our faces, and every now and then, burst into a laugh, as children do from mere glee. Thus we sat some time, all looking as amiable as we could, till Alee arrived with coffee. These ladies were from Damascus, —sent hither by our friend, Dr. T., for health: and they reported very favourably of the effect of the change. One of them was the wife of the Baalbec agent of the English consulate. The agent and his lady were kind to us, sending us, the next morning, a tray covered with butter, cheese and fresh flowers. The agent also guided us in a ride in the neighbourhood; after which he sent a message to the gentlemen by Alee, requesting them to give him a spyglass.

After the departure of the ladies, we ran up to the great Temple, for half-an-hour before dinner; and afterwards we took a more deliberate survey. I will not dwell upon what has been well described in many books: but I am happy to be able to say that the report which I found prevailing when I reached home,

and saw repeated in many newspapers, of this temple being in course of destruction, that the stones might be used for a new quay, is altogether false. The date of the report was the same as that of our visit: and no persons were moving stones when we were there. Whenever they do, they will find it easier to help themselves from the enormous heaps that are lying about, than to dislodge the blocks of which the temple is built.

The edifices are most massive, wonderful and beautiful; and some of our party were more impressed by them than by anything we had seen. Fully admitting the reasonableness of this, I recurred to the temples of Egypt, and felt how much stronger was the charm of their antiquity than that of any architectural magnificence and grace. It is true, this place is of unknown antiquity; but that is historically, and not visibly. One remembers that this was a stage in the highway from Tyre to India when Palmyra was a mere watering station in the Desert: but what one hears of is its Greek name of Heliopolis; and what one sees is the buildings of the Roman emperors. I am quite of Captain Mangles' opinion when he says, "I think that he who has once seen Egypt, will never feel equally interested in any other country."

The six enormous columns which are seen for many miles round are the grandest feature of the ruins. The eagle is interesting, from being the true eagle of Sun-worship,—unlike the Roman, or any other emblematic eagle; and, to my eye, little resembling any actual bird. It is not easy to obtain a good view of it, as it is in an inconvenient position overhead;—and the block which

contains the greater part of it has sunk from its place, so as to divide the figure, and to threaten to fall on the head of the gazer.—The great hall has a classical air; and its niches probably contained Roman idols. We wished the wall away which spoiled the corresponding recess, by being built directly across the area: but there was something striking in seeing within the same inclosure, traces of the three successive proprietorships; —those of Baal-worshippers, the priests of Apollo, and the Saracens. It is impossible to give an idea how differently the worship of Baal appears among the ruins of his shrines and in the school-room at home. Amidst the contempt of idols in which we are brought up, it is a perpetual wonder how idols could have obtained any worshippers. Children in England,—and some grown children there,—lose all patience with the Hebrews that they could so much as turn their heads to look upon Baal and Astarte, and have no words for their contempt of people who, in the Promised Land, could "halt between two opinions." They have a strong impression too of the vulgarity of Baal, who appears a much nobler deity when he is found to be the same with Apollo. I must confess that I felt almost as much affected with the sense of the folly of all this prejudice, when I stood among the ruins of Baalbec, as if I had just come out of the school-room in which I used to take upon me, thirty years ago, to despise Baal, and be disgusted with his vulgarity. Of course, I had long been aware, when I deliberately considered the matter, that this worship, like every other, prevailed, and could prevail, only in virtue of the Ideas in which it originated. But there is nothing like being

on the spot, for shaking off prejudice, and liberating one's sympathies. I had found this in Egypt, when I was instructed by what I saw to judge of its old faith as we would have Christianity judged of in a future age of the world;—not by the literal outward representation alone, but with the remembrance that a whole world of ideas and feelings was living and moving within: and here, I received another lesson, in the magnificence and exquisite beauty which could have had no meaner origin than a spirit of reverence. In these mighty halls, under these lofty colonnades, there can be no doubt that hearts have beat, and souls have been stirred, with emotions as intense as human nature is capable of;—of adoration and gratitude to the Lord of Life and the Light of the World. Baal was the most life-giving and beneficent of heathen deities; and he was adored accordingly.

Nothing but earthquake could have effected such ruin as is seen here. All about us lay shafts and capitals; and sculptured blocks shaken out of the ceiling of the portico: and when we climbed a shattered staircase belonging to the massive Saracenic portion of the buildings, we saw that we were surrounded by complete desolation. The light shone through the fissures in the temple-buildings; and the whole area of Baalbec was an expanse of heaped stones, with two unfinished minarets and some modern dwellings rising out of them.

The large square called the Forum struck us as being very beautiful. Here, when this city was the glory of the plain between the two Lebanon ranges, did the people meet;—the merchants trading between

India and Tyre; the Egyptians on their way to Damascus; the soldiers from Rome; the artists and philosophers from Greece; the ambassadors on their way to Palmyra, and the priests of the temple which towered close at hand. The edifice in the midst has left mere traces; but the corner recesses of the inclosure, and the niches, with the Medusa-heads, the shells, and other such ornaments, tell something of the beauty which is gone.—The Saracenic fortress and vaults are wonderful places for size and solidity; but of course, they do not constitute the interest of Baalbec.

Early the next morning, (May 6th) we walked to the little oratory in the Bekaa, about half an hour south from the Temple. It is merely a small roofless building, whose unadorned cornice is supported by eight granite pillars. The advantage of the walk was in giving us good views of the plain as we went, and of the ruins as we returned. The road was a mere track, passing among patches of tilled ground. In this path I saw, on returning, an oddly-shaped small stone; and fortunately I stooped for it. When cleaned, it turned out to be a beautifully sculptured little hand, grasping a leaf. No doubt it is a fragment of some sculptured wreath from the temple;—a bit of plunder dropped in the path by some thief.

After breakfast, we visited the most elegant of the smaller buildings;—the circular temple with an hexagonal cornice. Only four pillars of the six remain, and the edifice is crumbling away. The Greek Christians have daubed the inside and the door-posts with their wretched paintings.

We rode to Ras-el-Ain, the spring of the river of Baalbec; and on our way, we passed mosques, whose arches are supported by elegant marble Corinthian pillars;—symbols of the Sun-god having come to do homage to the latest Prophet. — The place of the spring is pretty;—a grassy spot, enlivened with welling waters. The yellow rose grew splendidly here. On our return, we once more went over the ruins, measuring the large stones, and completing our survey; and then mounted to follow our baggage train across the Bekaa.

The land was roughly ploughed, very stony and weedy, but producing good crops here and there. Among the barley, I saw now a sarcophagus,—then a hewn stone covered with sculptures,—and, standing up conspicuously in the wide level, the pillar called Hamoudiade. This mixture of elements of scenery, with the colonnades of Baalbec surmounting the trees behind, was strange enough: but the whole was further perplexed and made remarkable by a mirage in the plain, almost as deceptive as that in the Field of Damascus. — At the village of Dayr-el-Akmar, we obtained a guide, to conduct us over the Lebanon.— We had been warned that the Cedars were never accessible before June, from the depth of the snow: but we were disposed to try to reach them. Instead therefore of following the road to Tripoli, we now saw that road part off to our left; and we went more directly up the face of the mountains, nearly opposite Baalbec.

CHAPTER III.

CROSSING THE LEBANON.—THE CEDARS.—EDEN.—JOURNEY TO BATROUN.—LAST ENCAMPMENT.

THE passage of the Lebanon was very agreeable,—the path winding among woodland,—(chiefly holly, with some oak),—and over a profusion of wild flowers,—the yellow jessamine abounding as much as any. We rode up steep ascents, and down to shallow valleys, so that we were on the whole rapidly mounting. As I was riding behind, a man offered me some goats' milk, which was so welcome that I paid him lavishly. He followed me for more money, which I would not give: and when I overtook my party, I found that Mr. Y. had sent him to me, having paid handsomely for the milk. Thus the visits of strangers are made profitable. —The next little valley we overlooked was that in which we were to rest for the night; and our tents were already pitched. Its aspect was very Alpine, from the scantiness of its crops, the character of its wood, and the water-fall which came leaping down in successive stages, from the verge of the snows above.—I went up the hill-side, among the crevices where the waters took their leap, and there I bathed, in the coldest water I ever felt. This refreshment, and the pure air of the mountain were like new life, after

breathing so long in the depressing atmosphere of the plains.

The next morning, we reached the summit of the pass in an hour and forty minutes. The path was zigzag, and very steep, and so little encumbered with snow, that there was no difficulty whatever. We crossed two or three patches of not more than a foot in depth: and that was all. We could see Baalbec the whole way, by looking back over the Bekaa: and I should think, by the evening light, the colonnades must be visible, standing above the screen of wood. To our left spread the little Lake Limoun, looking so calm and still, that for some time I supposed it to be mere mirage. The moment of turning away from the ridge, and losing sight of Antilibanus, was rather sad: for we felt that this was our true farewell to the East. We were parting from the Plain of Hollow Syria, and from the pass leading to Damascus; and from the peaks which closed in the Valley of the Jordan; and henceforth we must look only westwards.

This first western view was extremely fine; and we were not disappointed by blinding mists, as so many travellers have been who, coming hither with their minds full of Volney's description, have found all blank. There was haze over the sea: but we could distinguish the lines of the breakers, and presently, a fine jutting headland, and even its reflection in the waters. The abysses of the Lebanon valleys were most striking, with their red and grey rocks, not lying in strata, but rising in perpendicular masses, supporting platforms, on which stood villages, with cypresses for spires. Overlapping mountains, cut asunder by these abysses, succeeded

one another to the coast. Between us and the highest terraces,—terraces which reached an incredible height,—stretched snowy and barren slopes. Beshirai, on an isolated platform, bristling with cypresses, and showing lines of flat roofs, was far below us: and so was Eden on its hill;—Eden which is perched so high, that the inhabitants live in it only during the spring and summer months.—A few steps further, and we saw the Cedars,—a patch of dark wood at the base of the slope to our right,—just below the verge of the snow.

There was more snow on this than on the eastern side: and the road was rugged, swampy, and slippery: but I did not find it necessary to dismount, and reached the cedars dryshod.

These trees have now spread, from being a mere clump, to a wood of considerable extent. They stand on undulating ground,—on a nook of hill and dale which is exceedingly pretty,—its grassy and mossy surface shaded by the enormous old trees, and sprinkled all over with their seedlings. The priest who lives on the spot pointed out to us three trees which are declared to belong to the most ancient generation, and which devotees would fain make out to have been growing in Solomon's time. There are nine more which look equally old; that is, as old as possible. Of these nine, one measured 38 feet 11 inches round the trunk: and one of the three oldest measured 30 feet. It is under this last that mass is performed once a year; and its trunk is carved all over with names. The priest told us that he had lived there, beside the little chapel, for twelve years, and that no accident had befallen any of the old trees in his time. The

Christians call the trees "Saints:" and when we asked how the Mohammedans regard them,—knowing that they come hither in pilgrimage,—we were told that they call them "god-trees." Their spread over the slopes is beautiful; and far down the declivities, their roots come out so woody and thick as to look like prostrate trunks. One of the second generation, the nine, is so strangely cut that we inquired the reason, and found that an Abyssinian monk lived in it for many years, in all weathers; till, at last, a rude hut of stones was built for him, which is still standing. The priest brought us wine, and gave us information very civilly. I would fain have staid a day;—or a week, if we could; for it is a charming spot: but it was thought necessary to proceed to Eden,—nearly three hours further, on a rough and hilly road.

The valley which opens about half an hour before Eden is gloriously beautiful. Wherever we looked there were red precipices, marvellously terraced, and white waterfalls, and capricious green slopes, and streams rushing in conduits or natural channels; and groves of mulberry and fig, about the little villages, perched in apparently inaccessible places. Eden is a Maronite village, crowded with churches; and the flat roofs of its houses were already occupied with trays of silk worms.—We saw it to no advantage, it being enveloped in mist this evening, and damp and dreary with mountain rain in the morning. We encamped on a stretch of grass near a large walnut-tree, from whose old roots a stream leaped in a pretty waterfall. The people were very handsome; and we saw a good deal of them, as they gathered about us, and lost no opportunity of peeping

into the tents.—When the wind went down in the evening, I stole out, and sat on a wall in the shadow, to see what I could of this new world. The handsome women, with the becoming fillet on the forehead, were talking in the light of the fires: the last gust had parted the mists, and the depths of the gorges began to appear, while two glorious planets were going down behind a western ridge:—the lighted tents looked warm under the spreading walnut-trees; and the guard were patrolling on the outskirts of the camp. We missed much of the peculiar beauty of Eden: but I shall not forget what we did see there.

The next day, May 8th, was to take us to the coast. We were to encamp within the sound of those breakers whose white line we had discerned from the summit of Lebanon. We had been advised to go down by the gorge of the Kadesha to Batroun, instead of pursuing the ordinary road towards Tripoli. There could be no doubt of the superior beauty of the route by the gorge: but our adviser had forgotten that we had loaded mules with us; and that for such there was no proper track. We had so many delays from this cause, as to give us a most fatiguing day's journey. We were in the saddle eleven hours: but we did not regret our choice of route.

We took a guide from Eden, who seemed to be highly pleased with his engagement. He spoke to every one we met, and hailed all the men at work in the fields, and all the women who were gathering leaves in the plantations; and the name Batroun was in every speech: but he did not always know the way, and twice, at least, led us wrong.—At the outset, a thick mist came down

upon us, and thoroughly wetted us. The road was a rough track, which sometimes failed us altogether: and where it did not, it was the most rugged we had met with, except one or two passes in Arabia. In the steepest part, where it was a mere staircase of rock, where I kept my seat only because the water was rushing down ancle deep, my mare made too long a step, and slipped on her knees; and at the moment, the crupper of my saddle broke:—of course, the saddle fell over her neck, and I over her head. No one was with me but the guide; and he was in such consternation, that his only idea was to hold us both in our actual position till the rest of the party came up. There was no mischief done but the spoiling of the comfort of my saddle, and that I twisted my ancle slightly, and tore my skirt to strips.—We went down through the midst of terraced mulberry-plantations; and between walls where there was no room for the laden mules to pass: so that we were delayed while the fences were sufficiently pulled down to make a passage. When we came to narrow ways between flat-roofed houses, the spectacle was very amusing. Our people got upon the roofs, and lifted up the burdens of the mules high enough to let the animals pass beneath, letting down the load again at the end of the strait. While one mule was passing in this manner, those behind occupied themselves with browsing on the grass and weeds which grew on the house tops. The charm of wild-flowers now again began to appear; and the cyclamen and cistus bordered the track.

When we emerged from the mist, the scene was glorious,—the gorge of the Kadesha opening below us,

and the rich skirts of Lebanon stretching away to the shore. The track down to the torrent was so narrow that the burdens of the mules occasionally struck against the rock on one side, throwing the animals off their balance, and threatening to knock them over the precipice on the other side. The drivers upheld them with all their strength: and one man, while doing this, missed his footing, and tumbled over and over to a considerable depth. There he lay as if dead: and it was scarcely possible to doubt his being fatally hurt. Alee scrambled down after him, and performed a feat which I should have thought impracticable for one so slightly made. He took up his more bulky comrade in his arms, and shook him up and down, as if he wished to dislocate any joints which might not have undergone that process already. After some minutes of this rough exercise, the restorative effects were apparent. The man showed himself capable of voluntary movement; and was presently as cheerful as usual.—Meantime, the foremost of the party had discovered that the proper bridge over the torrent was gone. The piers and fragments showed us what a safe and handsome bridge we might have found there at some former time: but now there was only a slight temporary bridge over the most tumultuous part of the torrent, where it was made yet more noisy by the junction of a roaring rapid from a mill on the opposite side. It required some little command of nerve for us rational beings to pass it, leading our restless horses: but some of the mules had no idea of any self-command; and they positively refused to set foot on the bridge. By hood-winking, pulling, and many blows, all were forced over but two;—a little one, and one as large as a horse.

We stood for more than half-an-hour in a damp mulberry plantation, watching the devices of the drivers. At last, a strong body of them lifted up the hind legs of the animal, and forced it over the bridge, wheel-barrow fashion. Then the creatures had to be reloaded; and much time was lost at this bridge. Next, one of the mules fell over, exactly as the driver had done on the other side: and he would have tumbled into the torrent, if three men had not jumped down in an instant, and propped up the animal with their shoulders, till his burden was removed, and he was led up to the path.—By this time, we began to wonder when we should get to Batroun: and I, for one, hoped that we should encamp somewhere short of it. The men were breathless, and evidently not equal to many more such adventures this day. But as we wound up the gorge, among thickets of thorns and wild roses, it was a comfort to see Alee sitting sideways on his horse, smoking his chibouque, and trying to help laughing at the tatters of my skirt.—On the opposite side of the ravine, the effect was strange of the slanting strata, fringed and feathered with tall upright trees. It made me so giddy that I could not look up at this confusion of lines while riding above a precipice.

On emerging from the gorge, we saw Tripoli, on the shore to the north, and commanded a noble stretch of coast: but when we sat down for luncheon, the sea looked so far off that I did not believe we could reach it before evening: and indeed the enterprise was rash.—On we went, over hills and round them, and dipping into valleys where we had no business, and from which our puzzled guide had some

difficulty in extricating us. In clambering out of one of these, a young man of the company received a dreadful kick on the knee from one of the horses. He was faint with the pain: and we feared it was something worse than a bruise: but next day he was limping on again, so as to show that no bones were broken or displaced.—Late in the afternoon, we saw so many villages, ruins, and convents placed on the crests of the hills, as to show that we were approaching the more peopled neighbourhood of the coast. And when we inquired for Batroun, we were told it was "down below,—there!" but the grey sea-line was still very distant: and I knew that Batroun stood out into the sea.—It was just twelve hours from breakfast, when we descended our last long and formidable hill; — a glaring limestone steep, with precipices on the left hand. At one point, the path made a sharp turn on the very verge of a precipice, at a great height. My sight was dim, my head giddy, and my limbs trembling from exhaustion,—my fatigue having been greatly aggravated by the uneasiness of my saddle, since the accident in the morning. As I saw my companions passing this point singly and slowly, I had some doubts about doing it myself; and I carefully looked away from the precipice. At the most critical moment,—on the very verge,—my saddle turned. By a sudden check, I pulled my horse round, so as to fall on the ground instead of down the steep. My companions could not persuade me to mount again till we were on level ground. Mrs. Y. rode on to send me wine: and by means of that refreshment, and Mr. E.'s stout stick to help

my sprained ancle, I at last reached the bottom of the hill.—Then there was nearly an hour's ride to Batroun.—We found blessed rest when we got there. Our tents were pitched on a low grassy cliff just above the breakers, which lulled us with their steady roll and dash upon the shingle of the beach. The sun had set: but the grey clouds which hung above the sea still showed a crimson glow; and there was a streak of yellow light on the waters near the horizon. As I lay on the thick grass and daisies in the tent, listening to the sea, I felt very well satisfied with the adventures of the most fatiguing day of our travels.

The next day, (Sunday, May 9th,) was easy enough. We had the refreshment of sea-bathing to begin with; and the journey was short and safe:—safe for a party numerous enough to defy the robbers who are said to abound along this shore.—When we came forth in the morning, we found that Batroun was on our right hand, standing out finely into the sea, on a picturesque rock. This place gives his title to a Maronite prelate; and the inhabitants are chiefly Maronites. Some of them came about us, and seemed kindly and cheerful. —Our road this day was almost wholly upon the cliffs, above the fine broken rocks of the shore, and sometimes descending among them. Almost all the men we met carried spears. At a sharp turn on the shore, when my companions had just disappeared behind a point before me, two men with spears ran up to me, one on each side my horse, and laid hold of the bridle, —one of them shaking his weapon in my face. Whether these were any of the coast robbers we had heard of,

I do not know. My party were within call; but I thought there would be trouble and a scuffle if I brought our servants and these men into collision: so I twitched my rein out of their hands, laughed in their faces, and rode away. They made no attempt to stop me; and their purpose may have been merely to beg. —At distances all along the shore are cafés, where the inhabitants sit under trellices, or garlanded sheds, to smoke and talk,—and also, it seemed, to take their meals.—Many anglers were busy at the pools among the rocks,—each one carrying his spear with his fishing-rod. Many women came down to the shore for the fish caught: and others were busy in the plantations, stripping the mulberry trees.—Nothing struck us more than the number of convents which crested the lower eminences of the Lebanon. With them, and the scattered villages, the region looked more peopled than any rural district we had seen for long.

Batroun, on its promontory, was in view for some hours: and I think it was before we lost sight of Batroun that we saw, to the south, the headland on which stands Beirout, the limit of our journey;—the port from which we were to set sail. Between them, and nearer to Batroun, lies Djebail,—the old Cæsarea: and there we stopped for our noon-day rest,—visiting the Citadel,—so battered by British guns,—and the granite pillars, which lie in large numbers in the sea, and are built into the neighbouring walls.—About a mile south of Djebail, we crossed the Natural Bridge, which is as pretty as Natural Bridges always are; and soon after, turned up the rapid, clear stream which flows down Wadee Ibraheem Adonis. My mare seemed

as little inclined to cross the bridge as the stream,—not liking its steep steps at both ends, its height, and its having no parapet. The banks below were rich with oleanders and other shrubs; and the whole scene so striking that we were glad to find our tents pitched not far off, on the shore, in the angle made by the river and the sea. It was yet early; and we had many hours before us for enjoying our Sunday repose. There was something sad about it too: for this was to be our last evening in our tents. We had been very happy in our tents; and I, for one, knew that I should never taste that kind of life again. For hours this day, I lay upon the sand, or walked along the margin of the waves; and I seem now to be able to recal all that I saw, and all that passed through my mind, during a day of busy thought.

The blue ridge to the south, which showed white specks in the sunset light, was the limit of our travels, the dwellings of Beirout being visible even thus far. Before me lay the sea, our homeward path: and behind lay the East,—the birth-place of the Ideas which have hitherto governed mankind. Within me were stirring speculations how long these ideas will govern mankind; and how largely they will enter into the views which must, sooner or later, arise out of the Western Mind, to animate and enlighten future generations in all the regions of the earth. It is scarcely probable that the function of the western races should for ever continue to be to receive and amplify governing ideas, and never to originate any.—The world and human life are, as yet, obviously very young. Human existence is, as yet, truly infantine: infantine in its unconsciousness of its

best powers, in the restriction of its knowledge, and its subjection to its natural passions. It can hardly but that, in its advance to its maturity, new depa ments of its strength will be developed, and the reflec tive and substantiating powers which characterise the Western Mind be brought into union with the P ceptive, Imaginative and Aspiring Faculty of t East, so as to originate a new order of knowled and wisdom, and give a continually higher and true employment to the faculties of Reverence, self-government, and obedience which are common to the whole race.

From out of these speculations now spoke the still small voice of conscience, prescribing the part which every thoughtful person who had accepted the privilege of exploring these Eastern regions should take in aid of the work of enlightening the human mind. Such a function, once recognised, is not to be declined by any one because his powers are humble, his knowledge partial, and his influence insignificant in his own eyes. The thoughtful traveller must have some knowledge, and some ideas which he could not have obtained at home, and which the generality of people at home cannot obtain for themselves. These he cannot, in fidelity to himself and his fellow-men, ignore, or bury out of the way of his convenience and repose. If he derives from his travels nothing but picturesque and amusing impressions,—nothing but mere pastime,—he uses like a child a most serious and manlike privilege. The humblest thinker, the most diffident inquirer, may be ashamed to make so mean a use of so gracious an opportunity. Moreover, he will be afraid of so selfish

undutiful a levity. He feels that, however lowly powers, he must use such knowledge and reflective faculty as he has: and again, he feels that if he can speak, he must.

He must speak; and with fidelity. Bringing together, and testing with his best care, what he knows, he must say what he thinks, and all that he thinks, on the topics of which his mind is full. It is no concern of his whether what he thinks is new; nor, in this relation, whether it is abstractedly and absolutely true. Probably, no one can say anything which is abstractedly and absolutely true. When all thinkers say freely what is to them true, we shall know more of abstract and absolute truth than we have ever known yet.—It is no concern of the thoughtful traveller's whether what he says is familiar or strange, agreeable or unacceptable, to the prejudiced or to the wise. His only concern is to keep his fidelity to truth and man: to say simply and, if he can, fearlessly, what he has learned and concluded. If he be mistaken, his errors will be all the less pernicious for being laid open to correction. If he be right, there will be so much accession, be it little or much, to the wisdom of mankind. Either way, he will have discharged his errand; and it is so important to him to have done that, that he will think little in comparison of how his avowals will be received by any man, or any number of men.

Such are the considerations which have impelled me, without conferring with inclination, or attending to my natural misgivings, to offer as I have done my views of some features of Eastern Life, present and past. I could not have accepted the privilege of my

travels without accepting also their responsibilities. Having, as well as I could, endeavoured to discharge these responsibilities, I can henceforth look back upon the regions of the East with more freedom and pleasure than I could from that Syrian shore, in the light of the last sunset I was ever to watch from the door of our tent.

APPENDIX.

A.

De Sacy, in his version of Abdallatif's book, gives a long note* on the subject of the connexion of Pompey's Pillar with the Alexandrian Academia and Library. After telling us that he will not enlarge on the evidences already offered by Messrs. Langlès and White, nor insist on the testimony of Arabian writers who may have copied from Abdallatif, he proceeds:

"I will just observe that there is much weight in the testimony of a judicious writer, who declares that he had himself seen the remains of these columns, and who founds whatever he says about their destruction, and about the date of that destruction, on the unanimous report of all the inhabitants of Alexandria. I may add that this event, which happened in the reign of Saladin, took place at the utmost thirty years before Abdallatif's journey into Egypt: and also that the name of the column is a strong confirmation of the story. I can easily believe that there may be much exaggeration in the number of four hundred columns, and even that Karadja was guilty of nothing worse than completing the ruin of an edifice which time had already damaged, and employing the materials in a manner worthy of an ignorant Mussulman: but the foundation of the story is not, for this, the less certain and invincible. The only thing which could be desired for further confirmation would be some testimonies from Mohammedan writers of one or two centuries earlier than Abdallatif, who, in their descriptions of Alexandria, might mention these colonnades as existing in their times. Mr. White has satisfied some of our wishes in this matter, in citing a passage from the abridger of Edrisi, who attests that the pillar in question belonged to an edifice situated in the middle of the city, 'whose columns,' says he, 'are

* Note 53, on Livre I., ch. 4.

still standing. The door jambs also remain. This edifice forms an oblong square; there are sixteen columns on each of the shorter sides; and sixty-seven on each of the longer. Towards the northern side, there is a great pillar adorned with a capital, and set on a pedestal of marble,' &c. 'Edrisi, of whose work this author gives a mere abridgment, wrote about the year 548 of the Hegira, and therefore fifty years before Abdallatif. His testimony therefore confirms what our author relates of the ruin of this edifice in the time of Saladin.—I can here cite other authorities equally positive."—De Sacy does accordingly give testimonies from Arabian writers prior to Edrisi; testimonies which leave no doubt what they were writing about, though some oriental exaggeration is mixed with their narratives. "These authorities," De Sacy goes on to say, "leave no doubt that the column now called Pompey's Pillar owes its Arabian name of Pillar of the Colonnades to the porticoes by which it was surrounded, and which were still standing, at least in part, in the time of Saladin."—After adducing the authority of some modern scholars in support of the facts under notice, De Sacy proceeds:

"I cannot satisfy myself without adding to the testimony of the Arabian writers one much more ancient, which, it appears to me, has not been sufficiently attended to, but which has not been neglected by M. Zoëga. It is taken from the writings of the rhetorician Aphthonius.* Aphthonius, after having described the situation of what he calls the Acropolis of Alexandria, the elevation of the ground, the difficult roads by which it is approached, the hundred steps which must be mounted to reach it, and the propylon which adorned the entrance, continues thus: 'When we enter the citadel, we find an area bounded by four equal sides; so that the shape of this edifice is that of a brick-mould (an oblong square). In the midst is a court surrounded by columns; and to this court porticoes succeed: the porticoes are also divided by columns of the same proportion. . . . Each portico terminates at the angle where another portico begins: and there is a double pillar which belongs at the same time to both,—being the last of the one portico and the first of the other. Within the porticoes, apartments have been built: some, which contain books, are open to those who are

* Aphthonius, a rhetorician of Antioch, is supposed by some to have lived in the second century of our era, and by some later. His works, now little known, were in high esteem in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

disposed to apply themselves to the study of Philosophy, and offer to the whole city an easy means of acquiring wisdom: the others have been consecrated to the worship of the ancient gods. These porticoes have a roof ornamented with gilding, and the capitals of the columns are of copper gilt. The court is decorated with embellishments of different kinds: each part has its own: there is one place where we see the battles of Perseus. In the midst of the court rises one pillar of extraordinary height, and which serves to make this spot conspicuous: for, when one arrives, one would not know where to go if this column did not serve as a sign to point out the ways. It makes the citadel as conspicuous to those on the sea as to those on land. On the capital of the pillar are placed all round the elements of every thing that exists.'—There are some variations," De Sacy goes on to observe, "between the description of Aphthonius, and that of the Arabian authors: but they are of little consequence. I suppose that the rhetorician points out, in the last sentence, the dome erected on the capital of the pillar, which contained either the principal divinities to whom created things owe their existence, or symbols of the elements." De Sacy then declares his belief that this place is no other than the SERAPÉUM, in arriving at which belief, he follows Strabo's account of the position of that temple.

On the summit of the column is a socket. The question is what it held. Aphthonius says, as we see, "the elements of every thing that exists." Abdallatif saw on it a cupola: while, according to other Arabian writers, it once supported a bronze statue, which was melted down for coin. On the whole, it seems to De Sacy reasonable to suppose that the pillar supported a small observatory, wherein were represented astronomical figures, and deposited the equinoctial circles spoken of as used for observations by other writers.

Enough seems now to be known to relieve the traveller in Egypt from the blank uncertainty under which his predecessors have till recently gazed upon Pompey's Pillar.

B.—p. 81.

Directions have been given in abundance by preceding travellers to those who may follow them up the Nile and across the Desert, about preparations for the expedition. Without repeating what Sir G. Wilkinson and others have said as well as possible, I may give a few hints which may be of use at least to ladies.

Every traveller who is going to the East must, if he values health and comfort, take the sleeping apparatus which is called Levinge's bag. A full account of it is to be found in Sir G. Wilkinson's "Modern Egypt and Thebes." The makers must not persuade the purchaser to desert the original make,—with one circle of canes,—for a more complicated and expensive one. The simplest is the most convenient, and, as I can testify, answers every purpose. The comfort of this bag, to those who are nervous about vermin, or easily annoyed by them, is inestimable. The certainty that one is safe from every intruder tends of itself to give one good nights. The traveller will, of course, see that his bag is never left open for a moment; and that no one is ever allowed to put a hand within it who cannot be trusted for cleanliness. It is sufficiently aired by being shaken out of doors,—the muslin of the canopy being coarse enough to admit the air freely. The coarser the muslin the better, as long as it keeps out fleas.

The traveller should not be alarmed if he finds he sleeps little during such a journey. If he is kept awake by vermin or by fever, of course, that is a great evil: but an easy quiet sleeplessness will do him less harm than he might suppose. There is, I imagine, something in the mode of life,—the absence of one's ordinary business, and the stimulating influences of an open air life which makes sleep less necessary than at home. However this may be, I know many travellers who found, as I did, that less sound sleep, and much less of it, than at home, did them no harm while abroad; and that they resumed their regular sleeping habits on their return. It is worth mentioning this, to save any inexperienced traveller from the supposition that he is or will be ill, because he cannot sleep as he does at home.

As to the very disagreeable subject of the vermin which abound peculiarly in Egypt,—lice,—it is right to say a few words. After every effort to the contrary, I am compelled to believe that they are not always,—nor usually,—caught from the people about one: but that they appear of their own accord in one's clothes, if worn an hour too long. I do not recommend a discontinuance of flannel clothing in Egypt. I think it quite as much wanted there as anywhere else. But it must be carefully watched. The best way is to keep two articles in wear, for alternate days;—one on, and the other hanging up at the cabin window,—if there is an inner cabin. The crew wash for the traveller; and he should be particular about having it done according to his own notions, and not theirs, about

how often it should be. This extreme care about cleanliness is the only possible precaution, I believe: and it does not always avail: but it keeps down the evil to an endurable point. As far as our experience went, it was only within the limits of Egypt that the annoyance occurred at all. Fleas and bugs are met with: but not worse than at bad French and Italian inns.

The traveller should carry half a dozen gimlets, stuck into a cork and daily at hand. They serve as a bolt to doors which have no fastening, as pins to any thing he wants to fasten or keep open, as pegs to hang clothes, or watch, or thermometer upon; as a convenience in more ways than could be supposed beforehand.—Two or three squares of Mackintosh cloth are a great comfort,—for keeping bedding dry,—for ablution, and for holding one's clothes in bathing. By substituting them for carpets, also, in Nile boats there is a relief from danger of vermin.

As for dress,—the first consideration, both for gentlemen and ladies, is to have every possible article made of material that can be washed:—gloves, among the rest. Cotton or thread gloves are of no use, unless of the stoutest kind. The hands are almost as much burned with these as with none. Woodstock gloves (which bear washing well) are good, though, of course, they do not look very handsome.—Brown holland is the best material for ladies dresses; and nothing looks better, if set off with a little trimming of ribbon, which can be put on and taken off in a few minutes.—Round straw hats, with a broad brim, such as may be had at Cairo for 4*s.* or 5*s.*, are the best head-covering. A double-ribbon, which bears turning when faded, will last a long time, and looks better than a more flimsy kind.—There can hardly be too large a stock of thick-soled shoes and boots. The rocks of the Desert cut up presently all but the stoutest shoes: and there are no more to be had.—Caps and frills of lace or muslin are not to be thought of, as they cannot be "got up," unless by the wearer's own hands. Habit-shirts of Irish linen or thick muslin will do: and, instead of caps, the tarboosh, when within the cabin or tent, is the most convenient, and certainly the most becoming head-gear: and the little cotton cap worn under it is washed without trouble.—Fans and goggles,—goggles of black woven wire,—are indispensable.—No lady who values her peace on the journey, or desires any freedom of mind or movement, will take a maid. What can a poor English girl do who must dispense with home-comforts, and endure hardships that she never dreamed of, without the intellectual enjoy-

ments which to her mistress compensate (if they do compensate) for the inconveniences of Eastern travel? If her mistress has any foresight, or any compassion, she will leave her at home. If not, she must make up her mind to ill-humour or tears, to the spectacle of wrath or despondency, all the way.—If she will have her maid, let her, at all events, have the girl taught to ride,—and to ride well: or she may have much to answer for. To begin to ride at her years is bad enough, even at home, where there may be a choice of horses, and the rides are only moderate in length. What is a poor creature to do who is put upon a chance horse, ass, or camel, day by day, for rides of eight hours' long, for weeks together? The fatigue and distress so caused are terrible to witness, as I can testify,—though we were happily warned in time, and went unincumbered by English servants altogether. Of course, the lady herself is sure of her ability to ride to this extent; or she will put herself into training before she leaves home.

As to diet,—our party are all of opinion that it is the safest way to eat and drink, as nearly as possible, as one does at home. It may be worth mentioning that the syrups and acids which some travellers think they shall like in the Desert are not wholesome, nor so refreshing as might be anticipated. Ale and porter are much better;—as remarkably wholesome and refreshing as they are at sea. Tea and coffee are pleasant every where. Ladies who have courage to do what is good for them, and agreeable to them, in new circumstances, in disregard of former prejudices, will try the virtues of the chibouque while in the East: and if they like it, they will go on with it as long as they feel that they want it. The chibouque would not be in such universal use as it is in the East, if there were not some reason for it: and the reason is that it is usually found eminently good for health. I found it so: and I saw no more reason why I should not take it than why English ladies should not take their daily glass of sherry at home;—an indulgence which I do not need. I continued the use of my chibouque for some weeks after my return; and then left it off only on account of its inconvenience: and in the East, it is not inconvenient. The traveller there finds that his reasonable disgust at the cigar-smoking of our streets does not apply to the Eastern practice. The quality of the tobacco, and the length of the pipe (in which the essential oil is condensed, instead of being imbibed by the smoker) make the whole affair something wholly different from any smoking known in England. I need not say that every traveller is absolutely obliged

to appear to smoke, on all occasions of visiting in the East: and if any lady finds refreshment and health in the practice, I hope I need not say that she should continue it, as long as she is subject to the extraordinary fatigues of her new position.

She must not expect health in those countries: and she had better not be discouraged or alarmed if she finds herself seldom in a state of bodily ease. If she takes rational care, and makes up her mind cheerfully to the temporary indisposition, she will probably be as well as ever when she gets home. Her chief care should be to look to the health of her mind,—to see that she keeps her faculties awake and free, whether she is ill or well; that in the future time she may hope to be at once in possession of her English health, and the stores of knowledge and imagery she is laying up by her Eastern travel.

C.—p. 99.

In a paper delivered by the Rev. Dr. Abeken before the Egyptian Society at Cairo, occurs the following passage. Dr. Abeken was a member of Dr. Lepsius's party.

Speaking of Semne, in that part of Nubia which lies between Wadee Halfa and Dongola, Dr. Abeken says:

"But the most interesting point connected with this locality, is a number of inscriptions engraved partly on the rocks, partly on the walls built against the mountain, as substructions to the buildings. They are short, containing a date with a king's name from the above-mentioned Twelfth Dynasty (most by Amenemha III.) and beginning with a hieroglyphical group, which at first sight it was evident could mean nothing but *the height of the Nile at that date,* being literally Mouth or Opening of the Nile. We were first struck by these inscriptions on some fallen blocks on the eastern bank, where it was evident from the position of the inscriptions that they had been engraven before the stones had fallen; afterwards we found many of them on the eastern bank in their original place, but at a height which the Nile never obtains now, being no less than 9-10 mètres above the present highest water. These ancient water-marks therefore appear to prove that before the time of the Shepherds, the Nile, *in that part of Nubia,* must have risen much higher than at present; and do support, I think, most conclusively, the opinion that at that period there must have existed in the Cataracts a bar to the river much greater than what is now to be found there; that owing to this bar, the Nile in those times rose in Nubia, not in Egypt, to a height never attained now, and

hereby formed the deposit of fertile soil which we found in Upper Nubia, at distances and heights wholly unaccountable from its present rise; that at a later period this bar was broken down by some great revolution, which also caused the fall of the above-mentioned blocks, and in consequence of which the waters above the Cataracts were brought down to the same level as those below them, and thus deprived Nubia to a great extent of the benefit of the inundation.—For a more detailed account I must refer to Dr. Lepsius's able development of his views in his Report to the Berlin Academy of Sciences, where will also be seen the connection which he most ingeniously establishes between these water-marks, belonging almost exclusively to one reign, and the great works said to have been executed by King Mæris for the irrigation of the Fayoom and Lower Egypt."—*Report of the Egyptian Society*, 1845.—pp. 13-14.

THE END.

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